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Life Drawing

To what extent might exploiting design epistemologies within an inquisitive graphic practice reveal graphic design undergraduates' experiences and understandings of the contingent and multi-contextual nature of employability?

Ian James Sharman

Thesis for consideration of the award of Doctor of Philosophy (Design PhD),
The University of Edinburgh, 2017

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Ian James Sharman

5th February 2018

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Abstract of Thesis

This research was designed to elicit insights from the implausibly-hushed stakeholders of graduate employability – current undergraduates. (Johnston, 2003; Moreau and Leathwood, 2006; Tymon, 2013). It is argued that previous rare attempts to probe students about employability have utilised methods, frameworks and/ or language that reflect dominant discourses of employability, so encouraging capitulation to existing perspectives; and have focussed mainly on alumni rather than current undergraduates. It is hypothesised that graphic elicitation is an apt data capture practice by reflecting the epistemologies and practice of its thirty-seven final-year graphic design undergraduate respondents at eight art and design institutes across the United Kingdom. My version of graphic elicitation was theatricalised through large sign-writing pens on expansive golden ‘safety’ blankets, emphasising to respondents both the process and the artefacts of production.

The analytical framework was phenomenography, selected for its claim to reveal the range of experiences that respondents have of a target phenomenon (Åkerlind, 2012). This contrasts with other qualitative frameworks that focus on finding commonalities of experience. The multi-step, iterative analysis led to several phenomenographic outcome spaces, elaborating the extent of ways that undergraduates experience and perceive the construct of employability within their education and beyond. The outcomes were incorporated to an interactive interface to address a key criticism of phenomenography – that individuals’ conceptions are forsaken by its reductive practice (Säljö, 1997). This element of my practice is proof of concept of an interactive phenomenographic outcome space, in which the categories of the outcome space can be drilled-down to associated underlying conceptions.

The thesis describes the reason for, and elaborates, my inquisitive graphic practice with students, and discusses the outcomes. The accompanying praxis document supports the telling, from production of graphic artefact, via photographic recording of the artefacts and iterative analysis, to the phenomenographic outcome spaces and interface. The thesis concludes with an elaboration of what has been revealed, and what might be elaborated by subsequent practice.

Lay Summary

This research was designed to seek conceptions about graduate employability from a surprisingly under-researched group – the current graduates. The few previous attempts to ask current students about employability have used methods and language that reflect existing views about employability, and so may have limited findings.

This research uses graphic elicitation as a research method, conducted with thirty-seven final-year graphic design undergraduates at eight art and design institutes across the United Kingdom. Graphic elicitation asks respondents to draw their responses to questions posed to them, and to explain what they draw. This is apt because graphic design students are familiar with visual outcomes, and with sketching ideas.

My version of graphic elicitation was exaggerated by using large sign-writing pens on large golden plasticised ‘safety’ blankets, resulting in dramatic outputs that are different in material and larger than other graphic elicitations. I did this so that: the students could draw more freely; the graphic and material element of the outputs was better valued; and so that the outputs were more interesting.

The resulting graphic sheets and interview transcripts were analysed using phenomenography (which is distinct from phenomenology, even though it sounds similar). In essence, phenomenography’s uniqueness is that it aims to reveal the range of variation between respondents. This contrasts with much other qualitative research that focuses instead on finding commonalities between respondents.

Phenomenography is multi-step and repetitive, and the point of it is to produce what is termed an outcome space. The form of an outcome space varies between studies but, in any form, it should identify the fewest distinct categories of conceptions that respondents have of what is being investigated (here: employability). The outcome space should clearly delineate each category but should also clearly describe the links between the categories. This research found that it was not possible to contain its results within a single outcome space, presenting instead five distinct outcome spaces. This verifies that employability has many sub-factors that may not have direct connections. Each outcome space here has: a table listing the categories with

short descriptions, a diagram showing each category's relevance to its neighbours; and a discussion that provides a graphic and verbal example of each category from the students.

Phenomenography would usually provide only one example for each category, because the focus is on the whole range of conceptions rather than any individual respondent. However, there is criticism that this divorces the experienced human reality from the analytical end result. I developed an interactive interface that partially addresses these concerns by permitting its user to explore and experience the underlying data in different ways. The interface also helped me to form the outcomes spaces.

The thesis describes in more detail why I chose graphic practice for the students, details my process, and discusses my outcomes. The accompanying praxis volume has material that supports (and is intermittently referenced) by this thesis. The thesis concludes by explaining what has been revealed, and how it might practically be used and developed.

Introduction

About This Thesis

This thesis describes how I used a form of graphic inquiry in one-to-one sessions with 37 final-year graphic design undergraduates within 8 art and design higher education institutes across the 4 geopolitical territories of the United Kingdom. My intent was to reveal the breadth of the respondents' conceptions of their encounters with employability – that is, the *impacts* of employability to the *current* (graphic) design undergraduate.

I relate undergraduates' breadth of conceptions of employability in a form that is exhaustive but accessible, using five tabular-and-graphic phenomenographic outcome spaces and an interactive graphic-focussed interface. The significance of those emergent conceptions and outcome spaces is to reveal for those involved in higher education graduate employability a comprehensive indication of the potential variations of conception within student cohorts. My specific contribution is to suggest that so broad and asymmetrical are students' ways of experiencing employability, that higher education may require individualised tailoring of approach towards each student. At the very least, any embedded measure or isolated initiative involving employability must be designed to encompass the range of ways that it may be received, and account for how it may be misperceived or rejected.

Whilst the accompanying *Life Drawing Praxis* document permits a more complete contextualisation of process, this thesis permits in its own right a full-reading of the arguments, rationale, method, and outcomes. The primary subject of inquiry of the thesis is the student's experience of employability within the context of their own education, wider-life, professional espousals, and broader industry or field. Graphic design epistemologies and contexts of employability related to graphic design are the focus of Chapter 1. The graphic method of my inquiry – graphic elicitation – and its execution is the subject of Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, I detail phenomenography as the approach within which I collect my data and analyse its breadth. My final chapter is exposition and sense-making of what emerged from my practice. It presents my outcomes, then I conclude with an assessment of what has been achieved, and the extent to which aims and objectives are acquitted.

Aims and Objectives

Contributing to Employability Discourse

The over-arching aim of my research is to reveal how the higher education imperative of employability affects the graphic design undergraduate – even prior to employment. Many other researchers (Law and Watts, 1977; Hillage and Pollard, 1998; Harvey, 2001; Knight and Yorke, 2002; Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007; Rothwell and Arnold, 2007; Kumar, 2009) have probed the constituency of employability and its boundaries – including with students (though often the alumna/ alumnus) – and I detail that research more fully later. My research, however, targets how the undergraduate *experiences* employability as an abiding phenomenon experienced whilst she or he is learning, practicing and living. What is employability's *effect* and *affect* on the current graphic design student – from the students' perspectives? For instance, how do the students visualise education and its purpose; how do they perceive what is to follow university; what do they feel about this interstitial period of their life; what are their motivations for both university and beyond; and what does that beyond look like?

The process of revealing the conceptions (and the content and form of the conceptions revealed) is designed to:

1. engage the undergraduate with employability in its widest sense. It will it help the undergraduate reflect on what makes him or her personally employable (i.e. to surface strengths and weaknesses, and cause her or him to *literally* see, by way of absence in the resultant drawings, any gaps to be addressed). But the design of the research will go beyond that to cause the student to reflect on the purpose of employment/ occupation – how does it contribute or align to quality-of-whole-life issues?
2. highlight to educators (and others involved in employability issues in the higher education institute) how undergraduates formulate and perceived matters related to employability, in order to improve the learning experience and design of the curriculum in a way that accounts for the breadth of such conceptions;

3. contribute to the discovery of more accessible and effective ways of conducting research in this field – i.e. visually/ graphically – that are as productive for the undergraduate design student as they are for the researcher.

Earlier research (Johnston, 2003; Moreau and Leathwood, 2006; Tymon, 2013) posits graduates as implausibly-silent stakeholders of graduate employability, despite solid work involving such students. I will elucidate that this apparent contradiction is contextual, and that this absence exists in the context of my research with current undergraduates. With the goal of shrinking that gap, I employ a hybrid method with two overarching phases: graphic elicitations conducted with each respondent, followed by a phenomenographic analysis of the artefacts emerging from the graphic elicitations.

Graphic Elicitation with Respondents

Bagnoli (2009) provides the aim of graphic elicitation in stating that it is a visual form of projective technique, said to “...include any set of procedures which, being minimally structured, allow people to impose their own forms of organization, bringing into expression their needs, motives, emotions and the like.” Though Bagnoli’s (2009) definition is a summary of Allen’s (1958 pp. 155-171) wider work on personality assessment procedures, I am using it to access conceptions and their affect rather than any assessment of personality. My graphic elicitation is the least-directed form, asking the respondent to draw visual responses with a 14mm-nibbed black marker pen onto initially-blank 2.1 x 1.6 metre golden sheets (the so-called ‘survival blankets’ wrapped around the homeless refugee, waylaid hill-walker, or finisher of the endurance race). I discuss the semiotics of the ‘survival blanket’ later, suffice to say here that the latter inference is most relevant to the undergraduate at the ‘finish line’ of his or her degree. The respondent explains what they have drawn, and the resultant graphic artefact and transcript of audio recording provides the data for phenomenographic analysis. To be more particular, whilst the golden blankets provide intermediate outcomes, it is their graphic content that provides the data.

Bagnoli’s minimal structuring above is important, since it elaborates the objective of my role in the elicitation. Whereas each session might suggest a graphic collaboration between me and the respondent, it is important to clarify that my

contribution is focussed on providing solely the scaffold for each respondent, and for ensuring that each graphic grouping drawn yields an accompanying explication from the respondent. My scaffolding includes indications of the purpose and wider contexts of the research and of the specific session, and explaining in broad terms what graphically is being sought. My guidance, however, does *not* extend to the generation of content by respondents, albeit that I probe such content. Questions posed are ubiquitously open, and designed to provide maximised latitude for response – for instance: “How would you represent the challenges of your GD education and where do they belong on here?” (*Life Drawing Praxis – Life Drawing Prologue & Overview p. 1*) The encouragement is always towards graphic representation (“how would you represent?” rather than “what were?”), permitting each respondent his or her own metaphors, parole and stylistic expression. So, even the ‘language’ of engagement surfaces from the respondent. There is also emphasis towards graphic organisation (“where do they belong?”), encouraging Bagnoli’s (2009) imposition “of (respondents’) own forms of organization” – rather than the researcher’s or the respondent’s affiliated institution.

So, my form of graphic elicitation goes much further than a decorated form of one-to-one semi-structured interview. The power of constructing a graphic response is that it permits de-linearization (permitting re-ordering or embellishment) by the respondent of the original scaffold *and* encourages adoption by both parties of the respondent’s chosen visual framework for description. The caveat for such potent effect is that the subsequent analysis foregrounds the resultant graphics, and respects respondents’ communicative intents. This free-form of graphic elicitation is particularly resonant for the final-year graphic design undergraduate respondent, since the creation of the artefact engages the undergraduate with their own conceptions of employability by using his or her existing ways of knowing and doing within graphic design. In that way, the epistemologies of graphic design are harnessed to provide a framework for undergraduate students to consider issues relating to their own employability, and in doing so illustrate the utility of graphic inquiry. I elaborate this confluence of respondent ways-of-knowing and the research design later (within *Introducing Epistemological Issues p.41*). The intended outcomes from graphic elicitation were 40 graphic artefacts (golden blankets drawn upon by respondents). An accompanying transcript for each graphic artefact

provided, simultaneously, a record of its creation and verbal elaboration of its meaning. Through rare respondent absence over several weeks of visiting the target institutions, 37 graphic artefacts were yielded with (accounting for technology lapse) 35 accompanying transcripts.

Phenomenographic Analysis of Respondent Artefacts

Tight (2016) asserts phenomenography's aim as: "identifying and interrogating the range of different ways in which people perceive or experience specific phenomena" (Tight, 2016 p. 319). This indicates a congruent framework for my own primary aim to reveal undergraduates' breadth of ways of experiencing employability as a phenomenon.

The ultimate outcome of phenomenography is described as an outcome space. The tangible form in which the referential and structural aspects are expressed varies by author, and I detail some of these variations in a later chapter. But there are some common expectations of phenomenography. A singular outcome space is normatively required, constituted from a number of categories that succinctly summarise the range of ways in which the target phenomenon is experienced. Each category has a unique title and a freeform description, which in unison indicate the meaning of that category of constituent conceptions being expressed by respondents. This forms the referential aspect of the outcome space. The principle of parsimony dictates that there will be as few categories as possible whilst still characterising the full range of variations of the data. This often forms a hierarchy (for instance, of complexity or sophistication of the underlying conceptions being described). So, within the outcome space it is expected that the nature of the relationships between the categories is also detailed – forming the structural aspect of the outcome space. My research is unusual in presenting not one outcome space as a result of my inquiry, but 5 distinct outcome spaces. This emerged from my adhesion to the triadic phenomenographic imperative that:

- the full range of conceptions within the data should be expressed as parsimoniously as possible; *and*
- each category should reveal its referential aspect (distinct meaning); *and*

- each category should *also* reveal its structural aspect (its relationship with the other categories with the outcome space).

This tends to suggest that my chosen target phenomenon – employability – is perhaps not experienced as a single phenomenon but a series of areas of phenomena which don't necessarily align elegantly with each other.

Outcomes

This thesis presents within its final chapter the outcomes from my hybrid graphic elicitive/ phenomenographic practice in the following form:

- Five phenomenographic outcome spaces, each consisting of:
 - a title for the outcome space, and a description of its over-arching theme;
 - a referential table detailing the title and descriptive text of several related categories (each known in phenomenography as a *category of description*); accompanied by
 - a graphic showing the structural relationships between each category;
 - a discussion of the relevance of each outcome space to the inquiry.
- An interactive interface (web-based at <http://lifedrawing.graphics>) exposing granular detail of twelve of the blankets ranked as most productive (the ranking of which is discussed later). This interface had two intents:
 - To support my own analysis of the data in constructing the outcome spaces – by providing for the researcher an open flexible platform for the colocation of graphic extracts and accompanying textual extracts, with hierarchical access to full transcripts and full graphic artefacts;
 - To provide graded, highly visual, exposition of the analysed research data for interested parties (the metadata for which was a result of the analysis fed by data from the interface itself – thus providing iterative surfacing of meaning).

- A discussion of the significance of outcomes and appropriateness of method towards their forming.

The formation of these outcomes additionally bequeathed traces of process which have been consigned for expediency to the *Life Drawing Praxis* document. This includes photographs of every graphic artefact (blanket drawn upon by respondents), and extensive detailed record of the analytical contemplation for each of the graphic and verbal extract of the blankets featured within the interface. These contemplations were assisted by my use of NVivo qualitative data analysis software – and whilst that process is outlined in a later chapter of this thesis, the raw coding has been contained to the NVivo data file. The analysis provided a total of 28 categories of description, with a further 3 sub-categories from division of a single category. To illustrate each of those 31, by way of exemplar is:

- a graphic extract from the respective respondent's blanket; and
- an accompanying verbal explanation from the audio record of its creation.

The resultant graphic and verbal exemplar conceptions are presented within their parent categories of description (within their relevant outcome space) in the final chapter of this thesis.

Contribution

My outputs suggest that employability is constituted for students from a broad range of contexts, all of which may need to be acknowledged when one works with employability in higher education. And this offers the over-arching contribution of my research. Rather than problematize employability's complexity for undergraduates, my outcomes extricate underlying stances. I articulate representations of the conceptions to be found within employability via new data gathered from existing undergraduates.

The consequence of my contribution, though, is not necessarily comfortable reading, since the diversity of my outcomes may compound further the enduring dilemma for marketised higher education. Specifically, rather than endorse the scales of economy inherent in mass promulgation to student populations, my

outcomes may implicate a tailoring of approaches to employability to each and every student.

The disciplinary field within which I employ my hybrid method is graphic design. The productivity of it there through its alignment with the epistemologies of design (related in *Engaging Design Epistemologies* p. 44) legitimates my proposal for exploiting it within other art and design contexts, and perhaps even the wider academy. I reassess the extent and significance of my contribution within the conclusion of this thesis, following my detailing of the five outcome spaces and interactive interface forming the substance of my outcomes.

The Significance of Employability

In the early course of this research, the relationships and obligations between graphic design education and the monolithically-titled 'industry' surfaced persistently. This is perhaps unsurprising since Findeli (1990a) points out that the sub-fields of design are unceasingly liminal to vocational matters:

The relationship between content and pedagogy determines two opposite poles between which every school necessarily hesitates or oscillates. In a design school... if the school is content-oriented, the characteristic profile is vocational; if, on the contrary... the school is process-oriented, the profile is... humanistic. This intrinsic polarity is responsible for the kind of schizophrenia every design school has experienced since the Bauhaus was founded. (Findeli, 1990a p. 7)

I embrace that schizophrenia by valuing the humanistic outputs of graphic elicitation – the graphic artefacts – throughout my analysis, so graphics are the heart of my analysis and exposition. This distinguishes my use of graphic elicitation from the normative research enquiry in which graphic elicitation is simply a subservient route to the verbal. That my approach is not purely vocational is emphasised by the broad range of life issues that I probe in my enquiry. So, employability is treated not only as a vocational end-point, but as a broad human experience that is experienced even prior to employment itself. Chapter one explores the nature of that employability as it affects, and is perceived by, the respondent group of undergraduate students; and will present the epistemological basis on which graphic design undergraduates construct and relate their knowledge and experience. Chapter two will demonstrate how these two elements have been brought together

through graphic inquiry, and details the justifications, logistics, contingencies, and contexts of production of that practice.

The Significance of Graphic Design Students

Prior to a more comprehensive examination of employability, a word on why the graphic design undergraduate student – my respondent – is as important to employability as employability is to her or him. Whilst the term ‘employability’ might have been so accepted into contemporary higher education parlance that a settled understanding is implied, employability is still contested territory (Sumanasiri et al., 2015 p. 85; Haasler, 2013 p. 239; Ashe, 2012 p. 131; Thornham and O'sullivan, 2004 pp. 717-735; Johnson and Burden, 2003 p. 2). Even participation within that contest is problematic, since discourse of employability is currently dominated by privileged voices (Morley, 2010 p. 131; Valls, 2009b p. 6; Tomlinson, 2008 p. 50; Moreau and Leathwood, 2006 p. 306; McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005 p. 197; Hesketh, 2003 p. 2; Johnston, 2003 p. 414). So, discourse of employability might be said to be somewhat hegemonic by the weight that is *not* accorded to current students. That is because there has developed an unlikely muted stakeholder within employability – the undergraduate (Moreau and Leathwood, 2006 p. 311; Johnston, 2003 p. 419). This seems improbable because the undergraduate features prominently within discourses. And that is why my undergraduate respondents are important – they have the potential to augment the discourse of employability within higher education. So, this research aspires to amplify employability from multiple graphic design student perspectives.

Within this research, I position graphic design within contemporary design education as a critical subject. Graphic design may not be formally recognised within the wider academic institution as a ‘Critical Studies’ subject (typically a School of Critical Studies where it does exist may confine itself to: “English Literature, English Language and Linguistics, Creative Writing, Scottish Literature, Creative Writing, Scottish Literature, Theology and Religious Studies” (University of Glasgow, 2017), and yet graphic design as a study area does critically engage with the world, and so in that regard is a critical subject. This criticality was articulated by McCoy (1994), who argued for the inclusion of ‘issue-oriented work’ (Soar, 2002 p. 582) in the academic design programme of Cranbrook Academy of Art’s Department of Design:

Designers must break out of the obedient, neutral, servant-to-industry mentality... Design is not a neutral, value-free process. A design has no more integrity than its purpose or subject matter. (McCoy, 1994 p. 111)

Much modern-day design higher education does root itself in socio-political matters, forcing an outward-looking investigation of society and its values by students. It is emphasised in graphic design through the use of graphics by bodies of power to disseminate messages and propaganda, and by dissenters to resist and contest the content of those messages. Contemporary graphic design education is illustrated and facilitated particularly by its pedagogies of critique, dialogue and discussion (Sims and Shreeve, 2012). Sims and Shreeve (2012) propose these as amongst 'signature pedagogies' within art and design. These are pedagogies that within their discipline are "pervasive, routine, and habitual" (Shulman, 2005). Sims and Shreeve's "critique, dialogue and discussion" (2012) relates not only to reflections of the graphic artefact but also to the socio-political contexts of its creation, and these are what I define as the critical aspects of graphic design (i.e. not only critique of outputs, but that briefs often critically engage with the wider world in which they are situated or intended).

Nevertheless, McCoy's (1994) "servant-to-industry mentality" has some traction, perhaps representing an externalised view of what the graphic design field might appear to be. But Barnard (2013) assertively scotches that:

society, cultural and the economy are not mere 'contexts' within which graphic design appears... graphic design is a way of producing, communicating and challenging social, cultural and economic values. (M. Barnard, 2013 p. 80)

McCoy (McCoy, 2005) again provides corroboration about the tangible impacts of graphic design as critical field:

... all societies have far broader communication needs than strictly commercial ones... It seems the more socialized a country, the more graphic design is associated with cultural and political roles on the side of either propaganda or resistance. (McCoy, 2005)

As employability might be said at times to exhibit propagandistic elements (Hesketh, 2003 p. 7; Ashe, 2012 p. 129), so the critical nature of graphic design is promising in peeking behind that propaganda, providing a rationale for the use of inquisitive graphic practice.

My own previous research reflects how easy it is to evade the student voice in employability. In one prior episode, I employed graphic inquiry to examine case studies of contemporary design education. My electronic pen recorded the strokes and mark-making of respondents, so was 'machine-readable'. It was presented as an animated short film at the Pedagogies of Hope & Opportunity Higher Education Academy (HEA) annual conference (Sharman, 2012). *The respondents were solely design educators*. At the following year's HEA conference, I oversaw a recorded discussion using the title and provocation: "Exactly which part of what we do in higher education is not employability?" (Sharman, 2013). *Respondents to the question were arts and humanities educators and policy-makers*. And its transcript directly informed my graphic-designed poster at the following year's HEA conference called: "Journey to the centre of the worth: what are educators' lived experiences of their own employability?" (Sharman, 2013). Since the conference was attended predominantly by educators and policy makers, the poster presentation and discussion of it was only within this group. This means that yet another of my employability-related outputs thus, again, had no student contribution. But there was one glimmer of having broken through my own collusion in any hegemony by co-presenting a paper titled: "Not two weeks in a place tidying up the paper drawer – an employability case study" (Patterson and Sharman, 2013) at the Design Research Society/ Cumulus conference, in which we presented on film undergraduate students talking about an employability-oriented element of their curriculum. The students' thoughtful, reflective, and cogent responses inspired belief that there was plenty to be said by this stakeholder group. That these perspectives could be rich and complex was bolstered too by writing a journal review (Sharman, 2015) of an exhibition and book produced by the Royal College of Art, in which alumni had been interviewed about their experience of their graphic design education, producing forthright and contextualized responses. In that review, I posed the question:

"How does an individual experience and resolve the tension between commercial and artistic aspects of their work in a world of employability-focus and commoditization of learning?" (Sharman, 2015 p. 197).

This is, of course, does not reflect all approaches to higher education, but the employability agenda is pursued and expected in particular by government, some

applicants, and students. In those few pages, clarification was necessarily minimal. But this current research has permitted me to explore these issues more expansively. The lively reception of the various methods of investigation and exposition used during my earlier investigations informs my decision to once again employ graphic-focussed qualitative inquiry. So, the topic of employability is promising and important to design education; graphic design undergraduates had shown their promise and importance to employability; and deeply exploring the process of graphic elicitation was promising and important by its current lack of deep exploration.

Chapter 1: Concerning Theory

Introducing Employability

Employability is not new. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) cites the term in relation to inanimate objects in 1889 (Oxford University Press, 2016). And as early as 1929 the OED illustrates the term being directed at people, in an example from the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper reporting: "...improving the general employability of young unskilled men." (Oxford University Press, 2016). But, for all the gender-neutralisation, developments and clarifications of the intervening century, the contemporary definition: "the character or quality of being employable" (Oxford University Press, 2016) shares the same assumption of common understanding as that 1929 statement. The expansive meanings of 'employable' and 'employment', rather than illuminate employability, reinforce ambiguity. And yet, more recent discourses, claims and discords around employability position it as so much more than "the character or quality of being employable" (Oxford University Press, 2016). Indeed, so sweeping has been employability's discourses that Smith et al (2014) remark:

The notion [of employability] ... is [now] so generic that of course it should be no surprise that just about every ability, capability and pro-social attitude ever identified eventually should be brought within its folds." (C. Smith et al., 2014)

So, the espousals of employability have acquired, through the construct's laboured construction, a grandiose unwieldiness. I must, therefore, limit my scrutiny of employability's expanse to that which more directly affect my study's participants – the graphic design undergraduate student within the United Kingdom. I will focus on discourses of employability that demonstrate conflict and omission within this context. It is important because, despite employability's vast gamut, it substantiates policies that are embedded societally, politically, and academically – so tangibly affecting my respondents' lives.

I will next contextualise the essentials and power dynamics of employability that constitute its disputed territory, but the detail of these disputes is a subsidiary matter. That is because there is a yet more fundamental argument: that conflict exists primarily between the powerful stakeholders of employability, and largely absents current students. So, whilst I paint the contexts of employability in higher education,

I will increasingly focus on the less powerful stakeholders – my respondent students. To do this, I have extracted to an appendix the existing models and stances of employability, and how my practice captures their disputes and resonances (Appendix A: “Life Drawing Mappings to Models and Stances of Employability”). Nevertheless, I do need to contextualise how employability relates to my respondents, and outline what will be contributed through my practice.

Employability’s Rise in Higher Education

Employability forms an important topic for undergraduates because, despite the muted student voice around the construct (Moreau and Leathwood, 2006 p. 311; Johnston, 2003 p. 419), a crescendo of work in the first decade of this century explored how employability might be enacted in the academic institution (Harvey, 2000; Harvey, 2001; Knight and Yorke, 2002; Knight and Yorke, 2003; de Grip et al., 2004; Moon and Knight, 2004; Metcalfe and Gray, 2005; Moreland, 2005; H. Smith, 2005; NUS, 2005; Knight, 2005; Yorke, 2005; Harvey and Knight, 2005; J. Booth, 2005; Pedagogy for Employability Group et al., 2006; Little, 2006; Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007; Thomas et al., 2007; Moreland Enhancing Student Employability Co-ordination Team, 2007; Yorke, Knight, et al., 2008; Knight et al., 2008; Yorke, Enhancing Student Employability Co-ordination Team, et al., 2008). Academia is a significant context and environment for the undergraduate student, so discourse of employability matters to the student.

The recommendations of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education and Dearing, 1997) directly influenced the development of performance indicators for UK universities, so it is no surprise that Harvey and Bowers-Brown (2004) note a respective frenetic pace of engagement with employability in their assertion to the UK Government:

The last five years have witnessed an accelerating pace of engagement with employability within the higher education sector. Initial piecemeal accommodation of employability through skills modules has developed [to a wider scope]... (Bowers-Brown and Harvey, 2004)

The development of employability into broader themes, though, is not without tension – as illustrated by Knight’s (2003) explicit challenge about ‘accommodation of employability’ in curricula:

... it [employability] is often seen to be inimical to good learning. We are claiming that, far from there being a tension, there ought to be symbiosis. (Knight and Yorke, 2003 p. 6)

Knight implies a dichotomy: that the tension and symbiosis of employability are mutually exclusive; that one can embrace either the tension *or* the symbiosis. I argue the contrary. I propose that specifically foregrounding this tension – and doing so critically *with* students – is a productive stance. Scepticism and tension from the design educator of traditional ‘undeepest’ modes of dealing with employability is not necessarily merely intransigence, but may form an aptly-principled stance in the interest of students. Nevertheless, Knight’s call for symbiosis does move on the debate, since it implies that employability be not only accommodated, but more: that incorporating employability might *enhance* the curriculum. And yet, nearly a decade later, Tibby (2012) finds that employability has still not fulfilled that promise:

Engaging students and employers with employability remains a challenge and defining what is meant by employability is as much of an issue today as it was 30 years ago. (Tibby, 2012 p. 2)

Perhaps this reflects Knight’s (2003) acknowledgement that a meaningful approach to employability is a complex, multi-pronged continuum rather than isolated initiatives:

The student learning that makes for strong claims to employability comes from years, not semesters; through programmes, not modules; and in environments, not classes. (Knight and Yorke, 2003 p. 4)

It is being stated that student learning around employability is most effective when threading employability throughout a programme. This implies that epistemologies of the programme field are as relevant to employability as they are to any other topic within the field. This provides the basis of my thesis: the symbioses of employability into learning and teaching need not *relieve* tension, but rather that the tension might be usefully critically *exploited*. McCoy’s “servant-to-industry mentality” (McCoy, 1994 p. 111) *should* conflict with the critical nature of graphic design. To deprive the undergraduate of this tension is to deprive them of their own wider contexts.

These contexts extend even to the 2008 financial crash, the austerity of which is still deeply resonant. Angels Trias I Valls (2009a) speculated in 2009 that the crash was

symptomatic of a structural change in the way societies think about, conceive, and value the world:

The 21st [Century] employability society hasn't shifted regarding the need to be able to respond to one of our major crisis of vision: formalist economic thinking as a dominant thinking paradigm. (Valls, 2009a p. 31)

Valls is indicating that despite evidence of risk, capitalism has ingrained within the populous a view of the world and of being that is primarily fiscal. If it is true that education has become "servant-to-industry" (McCoy, 1994 p. 111), then it is within the context, according to Valls (2009a), of the whole of contemporary society having become so. Modern-day populist governments seek even stronger proof that spending on and taxation for 'liberal endeavours', such as higher education, contributes to higher societal prosperity. Employability is used superficially as that linkage between higher education and employment – primarily by the 'Destination of Leavers from Higher Education' annual survey (Higher Education Statistics Agency Limited, 2014). But as outlined above, this is not universally welcomed within graduate education, as Ashe (2012) explains:

Critics have viewed this [employability] agenda as further evidence that the traditional liberal ethos of higher education which placed a premium on intellectual development is being eroded through a combination of the increasing influence of commercial interests on university curricula, government audits of teaching and research, and increased student fees. (Ashe, 2012 p. 129)

And yet, heedless of the educator's own academic credo, given society's turn towards material prosperity, it may well be an anomaly nowadays that a student's purpose in higher education is entirely liberally-motivated. Holmes (2013) states this bluntly:

Whilst those who would wish to hold to a liberal-humanist view of higher education may lament this increasing focus on the role that higher education can and does have in enhancing post-graduation employment, there seems to be little doubting this as the current reality. (Holmes, 2013)

This is reflected in the marketisation of education in the UK. There has been significant political devolution within the UK (and perspectives of the value of education); but *all* the UK's higher education institutes have nevertheless had to face the spectre of market forces. The importance of this is that higher education

must respond by demonstrating fiscal value to the students-come-customers.

Prospective students are directed towards part of the UK Government DLHE survey (Higher Education Statistics Agency Limited, 2014). This measures *employment* of undergraduates six months after leaving higher education. In a somewhat circular mechanism, each institution surveys alumni, the results of which are amalgamated within the DLHE survey – and the emergent relative matrix used by institutions as a measure of their own *employability*. This tenuous inference from employment to employability is, however, challenged by The Higher Education Academy:

... how do we evaluate the success or effectiveness of individualised institutional approaches [to employability]? Is it sufficient to rely on Key Information Sets (KIS), the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) statistics or student satisfaction recorded through the National Student Survey (NSS) to assess this? (Pegg et al., 2012 p. 29)

The undemanding conjugation of 'employ' into both 'employment' and 'employability' is seductive by its ease. But Cole's (2013) caution about such correlation is emphatic, pointing out that employability:

... is not something that can be quantified by any single measure. (Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey is a measure of employment not employability.) (Cole and Tibby, 2013 p. 6)

It perhaps represents a society disillusioned with education's traditional liberal ethos, with education-for-education's-sake (when allied to its associated taxation) resonating possibly now only with vanquished remnants of the political electorate. HE institutions have reacted pragmatically, by entrenching employability and earning potential as a primary attraction to students. This may be thought particularly significant for students of Graphic Design, positioned academically within the broad sweep of liberal arts whilst simultaneously being viewed as robustly vocational, perhaps even, as implied by McCoy (1994 p. 111), in hock to industry.

The Promise of Employability

Hesketh (2003) discusses "the new eudaimonia of continually enhanced employability" (Hesketh, 2003 p. 5), defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as: "Happiness or well-being consisting in the full realization of human potential, [especially]... in rational activity exhibiting excellence." (OED Online, n.d.)

This is consistent with the broadest espousals of employability (Appendix A elaborates). And yet Hesketh (2003) forms two dramatic propositions. The first is that employability within HE, even in its best form, is far from a positive force by being for students simply a stratagem to avoid least desirable outcomes:

Ironically, perhaps, it is not so much the advantages that are bestowed upon individuals by continuous adherence to the development of their employability. Rather, it is the disadvantages individuals attempt to sidestep through enhanced employability that forms its attraction. (Hesketh, 2003 p. 7)

Further, Hesketh outlines that even if employability were accepted on this basis, that the promise of economic wellbeing from employability is flawed anyway:

But even here, our faith in employability may be misplaced. Employability appears to create the aura of economic wellbeing, and ultimately a passageway to eudaimonia. In reality, however, things are not quite as they seem. The potential of employability has ethereal like qualities which, when placed under closer scrutiny, look less convincing. (Hesketh, 2003 p. 7)

Whilst there has been ongoing endeavour around scrutinising employability in the intervening period, the fundamentals have not changed. Arguments have simply been further augmented rather than resolved. This is particularly relevant to my student target respondents, since Bagnall (2000) asserts that such eudaimonia around employability has undermined education and learning:

...The value of education and learning are reduced to – calculated and constructed as – assessments of their contribution and cost to individual, local, national, regional or global economic well-being. (Bagnall, 2000 p. 21)

In Hesketh's and Bagnall's propositions, employability's benefits are illusive, but its consequences for the undergraduates are real. What may have had more extensive liberal dimensions – higher education in the art and design school – is now, within Hesketh's (2003) and Bagnall's (2000) framings, an instrument of capitalist catch-up to avoid disadvantage in employment. Ainley (1990b) paints the consequence of this as an unsophisticated student aspiration:

The result is that, even where formal study allows genuine intellectual development, students' educational participation is largely instrumental to gain labour market credentials' (Findeli, 1990b p. 5)

This places undergraduates as consumers of education in the same way as they are consumers of home cleaning products, with the same implicit threats to students' well-being – that not buying it is risky (Hesketh, 2003 p. 7). Study of undergraduate perceptions of employability is, then, a high priority. Perspectives that dissent from the dominant narratives might be thought particularly significant, because, as Hesketh states:

Providing a dissenting voice against the tide of policies introduced by various nation states... represents a forlorn task. And yet there is arguably a greater need now for such an undertaking than ever before. (Hesketh, 2003 p. 7)

And yet, no dissent is equally significant, since this suggests that the student's experience of employability is either well-aligned to the student's needs, or that the language of employability is inculcated to such an extent that students are oblivious of any other perspective or way of being.

For all the institutional stimuli to embed employability, it is, then, an ongoing dispute. So, whilst investigating graphic design undergraduates' experiences of employability, I simultaneously maintain employability as contested territory. Ashe (2012) supports this stance:

Given that the employability agenda in higher education operates with a particular understanding of employability, the term employability has become a contested concept. (Ashe, 2012 p. 131)

I later describe entire bodies of research relating to employability in higher education, such as the Scottish Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Employability Enhancement Theme series (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Scotland QAA, n.d.), where a common definition of employability (discussed in *The Gap* later) is pragmatically dictated as a start point. Ashe's assertion is corroborated rather than disproved by these approaches, as such prior collusive agreement ironically may confound acceptance of the outcomes from those who might hold a wider (or different) definition. I accept Harvey's (2001) supposition about employability that: "the core notion relates to the propensity of students to obtain a job" (Harvey, 2001), but only on the significant proviso of his qualification that: "most explicit and implicit definitions elaborate or overlay this core notion." (Harvey, 2001). This caveat is essential, but I argue further that these

“elaboration or overlays” are not mere augmentation, but represent indefatigable contestation. These are *underlays* rather than *overlays*. Sumanasiri et al (2015) supports this assertion in concluding that: “findings have confirmed the disagreement among various stakeholders about employability.” (Sumanasiri et al., 2015 p. 85)

A report for the Higher Education Funding Council for England (Mason et al., 2003) questions: “how much does higher education enhance the employability of graduates?”. It concludes that whilst significant effort is being directed towards addressing employability, higher education institutes are relying on hypotheses as though completely substantiated – despite wider literature revealing contentions. Mason (2003) details this further by concluding in his review of employability that:

Substantial resources are now being invested in efforts to develop HE students’ employability skills while they are at university. Current policy rests on three assumptions:

- That employability skills can be effectively developed in HE;
- That there is a consensus about which employability skills should be developed;
- Those employability skills, once developed, can be easily transferred into employment.

(Mason et al., 2003 p. 10)

Of greatest concern to Mason (2003) is that these postulations are cherry-picked from research that has no consensus:

This review of the literature suggests that all these assumptions are contentious in their own way. There is little agreement amongst researchers about what it is in the higher education experience that may impact on the employability of graduates, and the limited amount of empirical evidence is ambivalent. (Mason et al., 2003 p. 10)

This means that current employability practices and initiatives in higher education are conjectural, or (more realistically for enactors) pragmatically-based. As Philip Martin (2003) opines:

Academics, beaten down by the welter of jargon, respond in the usual way: cut and paste, download the bullet points and shove them in the documentation. Everyone’s happy: quality units nod approvingly; skills zealots offer a patronising smile. (Martin et al., 2003)

Hesketh's new eudaimonia, in this scenario, becomes truth by default. Harvey (1999) also suggests that the thrust toward enactment of employability: "is precipitous." (Harvey, 1999 p. 7) The drive to implement employability would perhaps be more productive if what was devised was analysed and measured, but one measure has been dominantly relied on that does not in basis appraise employability.

Evaluating Employability

Harvey (1999) elaborates this overly-expeditious practice and its presumptive measurement:

There is an attempt to move much more quickly to operationalizing the concept of 'employability'... Debates about employability seem already to revolve around achievement of (full-time) employment (of an 'acceptable' type within a specified time after graduation). (Harvey, 1999 p. 7)

This refers to a measure of the 'The Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) Survey'. And yet, even the publishers of the survey, the Higher Education Statistics Agency, provide guidance that it only:

...provides first phase information about patterns of employment and further study or training at a point about six months after completion" (Higher Education Statistics Agency Limited, 2014).

There is no claim about employability, and yet it had until recently been adopted by HE institutions as an implicit measure of employability. Harvey's (1999) critique is acknowledging that even his own work of that year with Blackwell (Harvey and Blackwell, 1999) is looking at graduate destinations in which inferences may be made about employability, but is not an examination of the notion of employability. Since then, there have been other longitudinal studies examining graduate destinations (Ball, Pollard and Stanley, 2010), which have included elements of enquiring about the anatomy of employability. Nevertheless, they remain primarily an examination of *employment*, with some inferences about the constitution(s) of *employability*. HE institutions, though, are attuning to the employment (versus employability) outcomes in their latter-day claims. Today's claims are more precisely evidenced, such as: "95.2% Graduate employment" (Edinburgh Napier University, 2016), with previous explicit associations about employability relinquished. Yorke et

al (2008) outline the deception inherent in the conflation of employment and employability:

... employability implies something about the capacity of the graduate to function in a job, and is not to be confused with the acquisition of a job, whether a 'graduate job' or otherwise. (Yorke, Enhancing Student Employability Co-ordination Team, et al., 2008 p. 7)

They summarise that employability:

... is subject to influences in the environment, a major influence being the state of the economy" (Yorke, Enhancing Student Employability Co-ordination Team, et al., 2008 p. 2)

Whilst this awareness is to be welcomed, it emphasises further that employability itself lacks measurement and precision. Claims to the success of any single implementation of employability are thus spurious, leaving employability as disputed and contested territory. This lack of clarity creates a stumbling block for employability, as spelled out by Sumanasiri et al's (2015) conclusion that whilst the:

...majority [of studies] still appear to be focused on defining and conceptualization stages of employability, only limited number of studies have focused on operationalization of employability as a concept. (Sumanasiri et al., 2015 p. 85).

In other words, employability is still so contested as a construct that its 'enactment' into measurable actions risks being premature or presumptive. It can be seen that the elaborations and overlays to "the core notion" (Harvey, 2001) of employability are fundamental, unresolved, and even potentially immobilising.

Despite the intransigence of the construct, there are some suggestions, largely untested, for the measurement of employability. For instance, Harvey (1999 p. 7) fleshes out a theoretical process for the "operationalization of employability" – though Sumanasiri et al (2015) still deem conceptual inquiry about employability lacking over a decade later. Harvey (1999 p. 7) elaborates that: "measurement is the end result of a process of operationalising a concept. Any measurement is only as good as its operationalisation." (1999 p. 7) Harvey explains that: "operationalisation is the process of going from a theoretical concept to a measurable index (Harvey & MacDonald, 1993)" (Harvey, 2001 p. 99). In other words, examination of employability should be based in systematic inquiry of its contingencies and

meanings. This contrasts with “policy-driven” approaches – which are intended to meet an externally-derived measure:

Pragmatic, policy-driven approaches to measuring ‘employability’, such as using statistics on employment rates, subvert the operationalisation process at the heart of any good quantitative research. They begin with measurement methods (or even a convenient ready-made measure) rather than with conceptual specification. (Harvey, 2001 p. 99)

Tamsin (1999 p.ix) relates how superficial adoption of such a broad concept hinders working with it:

Despite... grand hopes, pinning down the concept can be elusive and turning the rhetoric into anything that can serve as a firm basis for action can be frustrating. (Tamkin and Hillage, 1999 p.ix)

In aspiring to amplify the construct of employability, my study acknowledges, and borrows from, what Harvey (2001) terms the “correct sequence” (Harvey, 2001 p. 99) of operationalisation of employability:

1. Define the theoretical concept.
2. Break it down into dimensions that cover the meaning of the concept.
3. Identify a range of indicators for each dimension.
4. Select one or more indicators for each dimension.
5. Design instruments to collect information on each indicator.
6. Decide whether to have a multi-dimensional set of indicators, an array of indices or a single index and, if appropriate, combine indicators into an index.

(Harvey, 2001 p. 99)

The final step’s ‘index’ infers *quantitative* measurement. My study will, rather, scan for *qualitative* multi-dimensional indicators, in the form of phenomenographic *categories of descriptions* – as elaborated later. No successful studies of graduate employability using *this* process (as opposed to commencing from an established definition of employability) appear to have emerged in years since Harvey’s (2001) proposal. I argue that this is not necessarily because the process is unsound, but that such a complex *qualitative* construct is resistant to meaningful *quantitative* measurement. My practice is not “pragmatic, policy-driven” (Harvey, 2001 p. 99)

research for an extant stakeholder, so it has the latitude to implement a more textured, evolutionary, reflective approach that relies upon the participation of the respondent for its discovery. Each respondent session is about surfacing that respondent's own perspectives, experiences, and aspirations around (*ways of experiencing* in phenomenographic terms) employability.

Harvey describes a triad of types of institutional measure at length, outlining that in England they coalesce around attempted measures at 'rates' of employability (via rates of employment). As my study must probe individuals' ways of experiencing employability, I will not dwell on these institutional measures since there is little evidence of mutual benefit (i.e. the measures have little correlation to individuals' experiences of employability). In Wales in 2001, however, Harvey describes that:

... the employability focus is on the activities in place within institutions to enhance employability rather than simply crude measures of employability rates. (Harvey, 2001 p. 101).

In other words, effort is diverted from measuring employability as such, but rather examines the range of access to opportunities that might enhance employability – what Harvey later describes in detail as an “employability audit” (Harvey, 2001 p. 106). In the former ‘rates of employment’ measurement model, individual employability is left to individual educators or students, so tend towards being enacted through existing formulas of cv-writing, skill-matching, etc. Work-placement or work-replication is often in place too, and sometimes extending to the reflective technique of the personal development plan (PDF). The ‘employment audit’ model, it might be argued, offers no more than this. I maintain, though, that this latter audit model of measurement offers three distinct factors of interest for my study. In acknowledging the multi-dimensionality of employability, it encourages individuals and institutions or departments to contemplate other ways of examining employability – surfacing the facets of contest. The audit model also acknowledges complexity by foregrounding not only the quantitative measurement of ‘employability rates’ but also the detailed qualitative etchings of approaches towards employability – treating employability as personal and individually-focussed. Finally, the audit model explicitly recognises that whilst the institution has some effect on the student, each student has agency not only in his or her own employability, but also in whether he or she chooses to engage with it as a proposition at all. Each student

becomes not just a 'subject' of employability, but rather a 'citizen' with freedom to direct their gaze towards – or away – from the construct of employability.

Employability's Student Voice

The Gap

Johnston (2003) reports that: "The voices of other partners in the graduate recruitment process, the graduates, are deafening in their silence" (Johnston, 2003). This might be thought surprising, since even within my target field of design and creative industries, there is a body of research around employability that directly or obliquely involved graduates. Nevertheless, I will demonstrate that in the context of my primary goal (to collect qualitative data from current undergraduates about conceptions of employability in respondents' own language), there is a *relative* absence of voice. I aim to lessen that absence.

Harvey and Blackwell's (1999) contribution involved survey of nearly 2,000 UK art and design graduates from 14 higher education institutions. Whilst its key findings present some interesting statistics about the graduates who had graduated between 1993-1996 (for instance, that the majority were earning relatively low pay), the respondents graduated two decades prior to my research, were alumni rather than current graduates, and were being questioned mainly in relation to their destinations. One of Harvey and Blackwell's findings (albeit from a retrospective perspective) relevant to at-university experience was that in the 1990s, many art and design graduates felt that they had, within their higher education, infrequent contact with the 'working world'. These concerns are still resonant twenty years later, with most of my respondent institutions having formalised and extended their external-facing opportunities.

Ball et al (2010) build on Harvey and Blackwell (1999)'s UK creative industry focus a decade later from 2008-2010, this time achieving a 14% response rate for a total 3,478 graduates: "in art, design, crafts and media subjects qualifying in 2002, 2003 and 2004 from 26 UK higher education institutions" (Ball, Pollard and Stanley, 2010 p.xx). There is an echo from Harvey and Blackwell in that these post-education graduates: "place a high value on their higher education experiences although they would have liked a stronger connection with the professional world on their courses"

(Ball, Pollard and Stanley, 2010 p.xxi). This, despite placement opportunities having risen between the two studies from 29% to 42% (Ball, Pollard and Stanley, 2010 p. 62). Also echoed was that: “pay tended to be lower in creative roles” (Ball, Pollard and Stanley, 2010 p. 210), especially those with portfolio careers – the significance of this being that: “part-time working is a key feature of creative careers” (Ball, Pollard and Stanley, 2010 p. 208). The most relevant finding from Ball et al’s study for my own research – because it most closely correlates to the kind of affective impacts and aspirations that my research is attempting to disclose – is the assessment from Ball et al that:

Old models for work, purposes of education, skills agendas and graduate employment are limiting and prevent dealing with a new reality, in which creative practice provides the context for academic study, work experience, employability, professional development, innovation, enterprise and productive careers. In this new reality, work satisfaction is focused on measures such as personal fulfilment and opportunities for creativity and new learning. (Ball, Pollard and Stanley, 2010 p. 205)

Ball et al was predominantly a quantitative survey in its primary stage, but one area of questioning relating to career goals and motivations dovetail with mine. One particularly resonant indication is that 3D and graphic design graduates are: “more likely to have realised career ambitions” (Ball, Pollard and Stanley, 2010 p. 193) than other fields within art and design, though more worryingly that older graduates, women, and disabled graduates are: “less likely to have realised career ambitions” (Ball, Pollard and Stanley, 2010 p. 193). Also of relevance to my research is the indication that key career motivators: “can be clustered into four groups or factors using a statistical technique” (Ball, Pollard and Stanley, 2010 p. 197): being work/life balance, (ongoing) development, income, and independence/ identity – the latter being slightly less important than the others. These motivations appeared to be stable over time.

Ball et al’s three aims were to divulge: career destinations and patterns, the value of a creative education for other employment fields, and support for creative industries. So, matrices are presented such as ‘Top 10 skills developed per subject area’ (Ball, Pollard and Stanley, 2010 p. 75). Fascinating though these insights are, my aim is rather to contribute a sense of what it is like for current undergraduates to

experience employability within a contemporary design education with minimal normative prompting about employability-discourse terms like 'skills' and 'abilities'.

However, the second stage was designed to access more qualitative elements through a short email survey in late 2009 with almost 450 respondents, and 40 telephone interviews in spring 2010 (Ball, Pollard, Stanley, et al., 2010). Ball et al note that: "the second stage of the study was also a unique opportunity to see how graduates fared at the onset of economic recession" (Ball, Pollard, Stanley, et al., 2010 p. 5). This is interesting because though my late 2015 setting is half a decade on from those interviews, the UK is still firmly within public finance austerity measures, with pay rates having fallen yet further in 'real' terms since Ball et al's work. The difference with my respondents is that they have traversed their entire higher education within this economic climate, and there may be indicators of that now firmly-established reality. My respondents are also undergraduates within the higher education on which they comment, whilst the Ball graduates are reflecting retrospectively and with hindsight. The questions asked in the second stage reference a normative language of employability, even asking their respondents: "to provide advice that would help current students to prepare for work" (Ball, Pollard, Stanley, et al., 2010 p. 36). As with much other employability work involving graduates, this points to an underlying implication – that students become credible experts about employability only after graduation. I position them as experts prior to that point – but expert in being subjects of employability within their higher education and wider life. In other words, I am proposing that undergraduates are as affected by employability and its related agendas as are those who have graduated and are in the work place. That is what my research is examining – the milieu of employability for undergraduates potentially nearing the end of their higher education, but yet to encounter their onwards occupations full-time.

Ball et al (2010) again provide solid qualitative (and quantitative) research with students related to employability, but have a very much more focused approach that: "broadly invited students to describe an experience of work related learning in the public or not for profit sectors, how they came to engage in these (tutor-initiated, self-initiated) and whether they were assessed on the activity or not" (Ball, Blythman, et al., 2010 p. 14). Again, my research is aimed at a much less-directed

widest assessment of experiencing the employability agenda, rather than digging for descriptions of being employed in a common area.

York and Harvey (2005) have an intention to verify the: "USEM account of employability" (Yorke and Harvey, 2005 p. 48), since they state that:

USEM is too recent for curricula to have been designed with it as an underpinning approach. Hence it is possible only to retrofit graduate experiences in organizations to the approach, and in doing so it is possible to demonstrate a plausible, but not definitive, connection with the constructs embedded in USEM. (Yorke and Harvey, 2005 p. 49)

My Appendix A: Life Drawing Mappings to Models and Stances of Employability discusses USEM and how it aligns with my research – the component concepts of understandings (U), skills (S), efficacy beliefs (E), and metacognition (M) mapping broadly across the dimensions I investigate. York and Harvey point to: "some recent research" (p. 50) of interviews with: "recently recruited graduate employees" (p. 50) which are designed to elicit the skills and attributes from them that is said to indicate: "employability on the ground" (p. 50). Again, this is work that situates the employed graduate as newly-qualified arbiter of the 'match' between education and the workplace, and rather implies that the undergraduate (still in education) has little to contribute to perspectives of employability.

My critique of such studies is that whilst it is clear that genuine perspectives of required skills and attributes are being sought, there is a strong implication that the lists of skills and attributes elicited reflect the *actual* skills and attributes required for particular work scenarios. I see little corroboration of this (for instance, through extensive phenomenological work). So, it could be that these recently-recruited employees are recruited because they have managed to convey to the new employer that they are appropriately indoctrinated to the skills and attributes required, rather than because they either *hold* such skills and attributes or that they actually *employ* such skills and attributes once employed. In other words, it has not been corroborated that such intense focus on skills and attributes is the most productive way of expressing notions of employability, nor is it a complete way of expressing employability. There is no control measure of assessing whether people who did not get any particular job would have been better than the candidate who did get the job. The parties involved in employer recruitment might be said to have

an interest in demonstrating that the right decision was made – that the ‘person specification’ for the job was the right one (the employer to endorse their own processes and expensive decisions, and the employee to retain the job and self-validate their recruitment and retention). Whilst my research acknowledges that undergraduates have onwards destinations, my research leaves assessment of the ‘right’ matrix of skills and attributes suited to those destinations to others. What I contribute within my research is an assessment of the range of conceptions related to matters around onwards destinations held by current undergraduates. Whilst these may sometimes be expressed in terms of skills and attributes, the aim is for a richer and wider description of how current creative industry undergraduates conceive of employability, and how they conceive of being within an educational system at least partially-oriented to employability.

The Work Foundation and Will Hutton (2007) present a convincing: “stylised typology of the creative industries” (2007) and: “a series of industry portraits and clarifications” which help to point to the national importance in the UK of what it identifies as 13 distinctive creative industries (as defined by the UK Department of Culture, Media and Sport). This is relevant to my research in that I ask for an indication from my final year undergraduates of how each has conceptualised/ internalised the term: ‘industry’. Whilst some of my respondents may relate the technical-oriented differentiations of the Work Foundation’s report, they are encouraged towards a richer, more personal unpacking during the elicitation session. This, again, indicates that my research aims to access how those undergraduates currently in a ‘creative’ education conceive of the wider world and their imminent occupation/ employment. So, it is not the ‘truth’ of a comprehensive view of creative industries that I seek, but rather the experiencing and conceiving of that developing transition.

I have described a peak in the examination of employability within higher education across the United Kingdom in the first decade of the twenty first century, including the Higher Education Academy and Enhancing Student Employability Co-ordination Team’s ‘Learning & Employability’ series (Knight et al., 2008) and ‘Briefings on Employability’ series (NUS, 2005). Such was the development of focus, that the Higher Education Academy’s updated the ‘Pedagogy for Employability’ document (Pedagogy for Employability Group et al., 2006) and re-issued it in 2012 (Pegg et

al., 2012). Within Scotland, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education had during 2004 and 2006 chosen the topic of employability as its 'Enhancement Theme' (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Scotland QAA, n.d.). The activity of the steering group and individuals involved created the documentary traces at the QAA web site , and culminated in the 'Enhancing Practice - Employability' series (Bottomley and Williams, 2006; Cockburn and Dunphy, 2006; Macfarlane-Dick and Roy, 2006; Quality Enhancement Themes Steering Committee for Employability, 2006c; Quality Enhancement Themes Steering Committee for Employability, 2006a; Ross and Quality Enhancement Themes Steering Committee for Employability, 2007; Sector Skills Alliance Scotland, 2005). The QAA declares its aims for the 'Employability Theme' as having been to:

- raise the profile of employability, including its benefits to students, employers and academic staff
- create a clearer understanding of what is meant by employability
- encourage and provide assistance for the Scottish higher education sector in developing institutional employability strategies
- aid the embedding of employability within the curriculum
- implement its strategy in parallel with work on Personal Development Planning (PDP) as part of the Effective Learning Framework project.

(Quality Enhancement Themes Steering Committee for Employability, 2006b)

It can be seen that this broad range of work and resultant outputs targeted employability's promotion, definition, strategies, and integration. The bold body of work and range of presentations and publications conducted during the year's activities were summarised within four "Main Findings and Way Forwards" (Quality Enhancement Themes Steering Committee for Employability, 2006c pp. 12-16). It appeared that institutional engagement with employability had been most successful. There was an assessment that employers may not have been appreciating the contemporary graduate and their exposure to the "employability agenda". And, despite a low participation rate by academic staff in the year's national (Scotland) employment themes activities, it was assessed that: "many academics [were] finding imaginative and effective ways of embedding employability in their courses" (Quality Enhancement Themes Steering Committee for Employability, 2006c p. 13). But, regarding engagement of students in consideration

of employability matters, the conclusion was that: “although the theme sought to engage students’ associations through the Institutional Contacts Network and held one event in a students’ union, student participation in the year’s activities was disappointingly low” (Quality Enhancement Themes Steering Committee for Employability, 2006c p. 13). It is noticeable here that the route to student engagement is seen as being through students’ associations and unions, and York’s (2004) employability definition has been adopted of: “a set of achievements - skills, understandings and personal attributes - that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations”.

This is not the student engagement to which my research aspires. I am purposefully not using a prior definition of employability. Indeed, my method is designed to use as neutral language as practicable whilst still being able to demarcate a focus for discussion. I also engage each student individually, not assuming that any individual or group of students’ perceptions around employability can be ‘represented’ by any other student or body. Nevertheless, I do aspire to reveal descriptions that represent the range of perceptions and conceptions around employability for my respondent group.

Bridgstock (2011) presents a compelling argument that a focus on key transferrable skills may be less relevant in creative fields:

the entry level labour market into which Creative Industries graduates emerge is highly competitive, the concept of “graduate level work” is not as relevant as in other sectors, and full-time employment opportunities are unusual. It is unsurprising that creative industries courses report consistently lower graduate employability results than courses within other fields. (Bridgstock, 2011 p. 11)

She examines this through a study designed to explore: “the predictive value of career self-management skills and intrinsic work motivations to successful tertiary graduate transitions to the world of work in the creative industries” (Bridgstock, 2011 p. 13). Her method is quantitative survey, and as with so much other research targeting the graduate voice, recently graduated respondents are sampled. The range of models, commentaries and research presented here are not intended as a comprehensive review of existing employability work in higher education, but to indicate that my research is rare in several regards:

- It targets creative industry (particularly graphic design) undergraduate perspectives around employability;
- Its aim is qualitative descriptions of conceptions of employability by current undergraduates;
- It hopes to surface the range of difference rather than agreement by this stakeholder group.

That is the context of the ‘silence’ related by Johnston (2003). The graduate may have been targeted by previous employability research, but *undergraduates* (current students) are relatively untapped. What I have demonstrated here is that almost all other stakeholders of employability – including government, higher education institutions, employability researchers, educators, and even graduate alumni – have become privileged stakeholders. They are privileged by their respective accounts, motivations and understanding having been afforded greater prominence within the discourses of employability, and for being actively sought-out within those discourses. Current undergraduates are the lesser-privileged, relatively silent (but no less relevant) stakeholders. Moreau (2006) emphasises that this silence is not passive, but a consequence of the design of research around employability:

... perspectives of graduates are often ignored [with] a tendency to focus on groups with the potential to influence the government... (Moreau and Leathwood, 2006 p. 311)

Tymon (2013), even a decade later than Johnston, concurs that:

The missing perspective is the view of current students. Because these students are the intended recipients of employability skills development, their views are important. (Tymon, 2013).

Tymon describes having uncovered: “Three other potential sources of current student views” (Tymon, 2013 p. 849) though it is difficult to discern all relevant research because employability has vague affiliated disciplinarity, and so depends on the purpose and aims of respective researchers. Tymon’s (2013) study explored: “the views of over 400 business studies, marketing and human resource management undergraduate students about employability.” (Tymon, 2013 p. 841) There were four questions posed, each one explicitly mentioning the term ‘employability’, so differs from my study in being highly-structured and focused on that term in its probing. Given this, one might argue that the study may not actually

be exploring student views of the concept of employability and its impact, but rather exploring the word 'employability' and its surface connotations. The results bear this out, as the: "... students are more concerned with the instrumental or economic view of employability." (Tymon, 2013 p. 850). This is not surprising given that we've heard already that fiscal thought processes dominate capitalist societies, though Tymon reports that:

The final- year students did show some awareness of employability in its widest sense, suggesting it was about 'ensuring future employment' (Tymon, 2013 p. 850)

There was no consideration within the methodology of Tymon's study on whether it correlated with the students' disciplinary ways of knowing and expressing themselves, but he describes that:

Various authors have suggested that business students should be more interested in, and have a greater awareness of, employability as they have opted to study a vocationally-oriented subject (Berman and Ritchie 2006; Jackson 2009; Parrott 2010). Therefore, these students could have a more informed perspective which may limit the potential for generalisation of the results. (Tymon, 2013 p. 854)

I disagree with the asserted linkage between an apparently 'vocational-oriented subject' and students with a 'more informed perspective' of employability, but rather counter that such a focus may lead to strengthened conflation of employability and employment (or at least little concern for their conflation). They, perhaps, simply take with them the last generation's perspectives. They may be more informed of the existing perspectives of the powerful, but no more capable of expressing their own experiences of employability and wider connotations. My study argues in the following section that it is the pedagogic and epistemological approach, rather than the vocational-orientation, that differentiates the 'informed' student. Business students may be simply more compliant than informed.

Bridging the Gap

Ashe (2012), in describing an approach to employability within a formal critical studies subject area, concludes that:

... introducing students to issues relating to graduate employment does not require the fragmentation of knowledge into compliant and critical models, and the subsequent erasure of the former. (Ashe, 2012 p. 136)

This is important for my proposition – that the tension of employability in design education is generative. Ashe outlines how students were deeply-engaged through a critical learning pyramid (Ashe, 2012 p. 134) to learn about the different levels of understanding around the construct of employability, so that: “the arena of graduate employability is discursively constituted” (Ashe, 2012 p. 133), rather than only compliantly assimilated. I will elaborate Ashe’s epistemological concerns in a later section, the importance here being that it indicates compliance and criticality as compatible rather than mutually exclusive.

Moreau and Leatherwood ask the question: “to what extent do graduates’ discourses reproduce or challenge the dominant policy discourse of employability?” (Moreau and Leatherwood, 2006 p. 306), pointing out that the dominant policy discourse involves:

The employment question... [having] been reformulated into the ‘employability’ question... Unemployment is now more likely to be seen as an individual problem. (Moreau and Leatherwood, 2006 p. 309)

Moreau and Leatherwood (2006 p. 311) scanned too for one-sided compliance with dominant discourses of employability, asserting that “... the perspectives of graduates are often ignored.” (Moreau and Leatherwood, 2006 p. 311) This research reached, as did Tymon’s (2013), across disciplines – in this case 310 students from Psychology, Business, Computing and Film Studies. The study was longitudinal, though the paper focuses on the analysis of 5 semi-structured face-to-face interviews, and 32 telephone interviews with students who had graduated. These provided a snapshot of students’ current situations with regard to employment, whilst the 5 face-to-face interviews focused on exploring “...in some depth the discourses graduates used in relation to employment and employability” (Moreau and Leatherwood, 2006 p. 312). The latter 5 interviews (with narrative support from annual interviews with 18 students throughout their studies), then, are most relevant to my study since they most closely reflect the sense of what it is like to be a subject of the employability agenda. Moreau and Leatherwood find students focused on individual skills and abilities, “reflecting rather than challenging current policy

discourses of employability” (Moreau and Leathwood, 2006 p. 314). Even in areas of equality of opportunity and discrimination, the students’ response en-masse did not challenge deeper underlying mechanisms but rather focused on individuals’ access to redress unfairness, which “reinforces the individualism evident in wider policy discourses” (Moreau and Leathwood, 2006 p. 319). The conclusion of this extensive, though increasingly focused study, is that is:

... of key importance to provide students and graduates with a critical framework within which to interpret concepts of employability and their experiences in entering the graduate labour market. (Moreau and Leathwood, 2006 p. 320)

Whilst Ashe (2012) advocated a critical framework for ‘critical studies’ subject areas, Moreau and Leatherwood (Moreau and Leathwood, 2006) are advocating that all students should be bestowed a critical context to employability – not to satiate any political imperative, but because it benefits the student. This helps to mitigate Hesketh’s (2003) view that most pernicious in dominant perspectives of employability is the inculcation that one’s own backgrounds and contexts are “irrelevant” (Hesketh, 2003 p. 10). My study’s semi-structure graphic method is designed to foreground these contexts explicitly, and temper researcher (my) use of employability’s dominant language and power-positions.

Another study, Tomlinson (2008):

draws upon research that has examined the way in which higher education students, on the verge of making the transition into the labour market, understand their future work and employability. (Tomlinson, 2008 p. 51)

The study used semi-structured interviews with 53 final-year undergraduate students across many subject areas in one higher education institution. It found that amongst the final year undergraduates “their higher education credentials were seen as positional goods and a key dimension of their future employability” (Tomlinson, 2008 p. 52) It reinforces the others studies in finding that:

this group of higher education students have internalised the dominant human capital theory discourse.” (Tomlinson, 2008 p. 55)

But this brought not reassurance for students, but anxiety about grades, institutional status, and degree classification. Perhaps they sense the implications of Marks's (2010) assertion about the discourse of employability:

... that the discourse has strong normative, perhaps even disciplinary, effects on the individual worker (Garsten and Jacobsson, 2004). (Marks and Huzzard, 2010)

Which may too explain that Tomlinson's (2008 p. 52) students' increasing conformity and anxiety led to:

... a heavy emphasis... placed upon the need to develop a narrative of employability that encompassed experiences and achievement outside of their degrees (Tomlinson, 2008 p. 57)

Tomlinson concludes that "the human capital framework" (the discourses of which, it having been shown, the students have internalised) "has been exposed as an unreliable tool for understanding the concept of employability" (Tomlinson, 2008 p. 59). In other words, we see evidence again that students have assimilated the dominant discourses of employability from other stakeholders, so that when asked directly about employability, students are likely to recapitulate rather than express experiential conceptions. Once again, there is confirmation that any study examining employability with students may well need to find alternative methodologies and methods to access new material. My study turns to graphic elicitation for this, overviewed in *Engaging Design Epistemologies* later, and detailed in *Chapter 2: Concerning Practice*.

Another study by Rothwell (2009) of Business post-graduate students offers a definition of 'self-perceived employability' as: "the perceived ability to attain sustainable employment appropriate to one's qualification level." (Rothwell et al., 2008 p. 2; Rothwell et al., 2009 p. 154). This is a development from their earlier work (2007), where they adopted the definition: "the ability to keep the job one has or to get the job one desires" (Rothwell and Arnold, 2007 p. 25). All three studies, then, employ similar definitions, and all used surveys and questionnaires, so employability is contained (with extensive justification relating to related constructs and sub-domains) to an instrumental definition, and investigated in an instrumental way. It is small wonder, then, given such tight focus that the latter concluded that:

“Employability was not influenced by respondent attributes such as cultural background, gender, or the ability to undertake an internship.” But the two latter studies employed a matrix (Rothwell et al., 2009 p. 154) that has interest to my study, since their survey/ questionnaire questions are based on four broad dimensions from that matrix: ‘my university’, ‘self-belief’, ‘my field of study’, and ‘the state of the external labour market’. These dimensions are more prescriptive than my own, but nevertheless are founded on asking *around* employability more than asking *about* employability. This somewhat reflects my analysis that Tymon (2013) may uncover more about the word than the concept. Rothwell’s (2009) study is more relevant to mine than Tymon’s too in its critique that:

... employability remains a relatively under-researched concept in the sense of any empirical investigation of what it actually means to individuals in the context of their experiences, their aspirations, and their perceptions of their ability to compete in the external labor market. (Rothwell et al., 2009 p. 153)

The conceptual under-exploration may somewhat explain the superficial compliance (or resistance) by those expected to ‘embed’ employability, since:

The general consensus [of the 2012 Teaching and Learning Summit on Employability] was that models for addressing employability are often presented without the theoretical roots and underlying value positions exposed and explored. This can disengage academics from the debate. (Tibby, 2012 p. 5)

I suggest that, in addition, this has disengaged the undergraduate student from the debate too. Each of these existing studies demonstrates that the methodologies and methods for eliciting the student voice around employability are directly related to the authors’ own belief systems around employability, and indeed around the validity of different methods. These values are reflected too in the student subject disciplines selected for study, and the authors’ own disciplinary settings are also determinants. Whilst this builds a tapestry of data, it clouds comparisons of employability between different subject areas. But perhaps this is an asset rather than a problem, since we have heard how employability *should* be framed within each subject area’s *own* epistemologies and understandings. The work *should* be done afresh for each discipline and sub-discipline, though clearly gaining relevant inspirations from approaches elsewhere. My study’s respondents, epistemological-basis, and practice are all rooted insistently in graphic design.

Generating Deep Echoes

What is potentially more insidious than any supposed absence of current student voice around employability is the recurrent findings that the rarely-tapped current student voice mirrors so precisely the powerful discourses around employability. The disquieting aspect of this is described by Barnett (1997) in Johnston (2003):

Bodies of knowledge are also sites of organised power ... Their definitions of the world impose themselves on those who fall under their sway. Those who inhabit them rarely experience their oppressive character. (Barnett, 1997 in Johnston, 2003 p. 416)

Given the dominance of the more vocal voices in employability, this begs the question of whether any correlation between those voices and current student voices in employability is incidental. Whilst the students have somewhat 'bought in' merely by attending an undergraduate programme, it is possible that undergraduate students have been *required* to forgo expression of their own instincts, opinions and agency by being subject to (and/or object of) the employability agenda. Hinchliffe & Jolly (2011) infer it is the latter, in quoting conclusions of a survey by Jary & Shah (2009):

... a survey involving 15 case study universities across a range of disciplines (biosciences, business studies, sociology) (Jary & Shah, 2009) concludes: 'The employability and skills agenda of the government is not always fully shared by students. A narrow focus on skills and employability neglects the equally important ways in which higher education changes people's lives' (p. 5). (Hinchliffe and Jolly, 2011 p. 582)

This thesis recognises that contemporary higher education has made considerable advances in expanding the 'what' and the 'how' of student engagement with employability, but argues that undergraduates have been underexposed to the contingencies and conflicts that mark employability as a construct. This means that current student discourse of the matter can be shallow, even though the discourse around these elements has continued for decades. The early part of the twenty-first century has seen higher education policy fully embrace the vocabulary of employability, and actively encourage expanded practices of engagement with students. And yet, we have seen that rarely do students engage with the gamut of discourse. Granted that graduates are sometimes asked, having gained employment, to adjudicate on the validity of what they were previously presented.

But this is usually through questionnaires of pre-formed matrices, so still not providing depth of undergraduate discourse around employability. Current exposure to this depth is largely reserved for the privileged stakeholders of employability who know its vocabulary, wider societal and historical contexts. Even for these privileged few, Johnston (2003) argues that the totality of the research discourse lacks depth:

In order to achieve insights into questions of 'why' and 'how', recognising that full understanding of causality is impossible, graduate employment researchers would have to focus far more in depth. (Johnston, 2003 p. 421)

This lack of depth is inconsistent with higher education, where students are expected to contextualise the knowledge of their field. Yet in the matter of employability, they are expected to remain contextually indolent. I propose the metaphor of a jigsaw, with a destination image printed on its box. The 'what' and 'how' of employability provide the pieces of the puzzle. Students may appear to be contributing by the slotting together of their own jigsaw, but it is an illusion conjured by being able to identify and slot-in the pieces faster than their peers. Some undergraduates may even be provided a choice of which jigsaw to choose. Those interested in self-employment may have been given the 'entrepreneurial jigsaw', or the prospective researcher provided the 'academic jigsaw'. Nevertheless, the complete image – the gestalt – is currently pre-printed by more powerful stakeholders.

My practice was designed instead to generate the student respondent's own image afresh through an open graphic elicitation – in which the respondent was guided as minimally as possible towards their own aesthetic, semantics, and semiotics. Their thoughts were scaffolded through various chronologies and contexts, but I did not present any pre-defined liminalities of employability to students. As students drew, we discussed what each of their own representations meant to them. In this way, the process engaged and challenged the student about *his or her* own experiences of the phenomenon of employability. This means that new depth was accumulated for the individual student, and for the research. But we are interested here, too, in what the respondent saw on standing back from his or her own fusion of images – of the whole design. This aligns with my previously stated purpose to engage, specifically, the graphic design undergraduate with thinking about her or his own employability. That is because the 'seen' forms the graphic element of graphic design, and the

'standing back' represents the design elements of graphic design (for instance, the materiality and scale of the canvas, with its balance of marks/ shapes/ text versus negative space, and of its hierarchies and density of information).

I have outlined in this section how employability has had an evolving, and sometimes frenetic, traction within higher education. This has given the impression to policy-makers, educators, and students that there is a settled agreement on employability's inferences, meanings and implementations. And yet, I have demonstrated that there is considerable *fundamental* contest around the construct. And further, that in an eagerness to encourage students to engage with employability, these contestations are concealed from students. Students tend to be presented with existing dominant discourses and languages of employability, with little opportunity for counterpoint. This failure to expose wider discourses of employability exacerbates the void in current student perspectives, because students then deem employability to be a decided matter. The lack of opportunity for current students to supplement employability's discourse signals this even more emphatically. My practice aspires to disrupt this.

Introducing Epistemological Issues

This section outlines *how* my practice will reveal undergraduate conceptions around employability by consideration of the epistemological issues relevant to the graphic design undergraduate. It will argue that as graphic design is a critical subject, it is incumbent to present employability openly, critically and multi-dimensionally to students. This will provide permission for voices of dissent, concern, and informed ambivalence from students. I will detail my argument that graphic elicitation aligns to these epistemologies and practices familiar to graphic design students. It does this by employing the graphic design signature pedagogies listed earlier of critique, dialogue and discussion (Sims and Shreeve, 2012), and additionally uses the other proposed signature pedagogies of the brief and sketching (Sims and Shreeve, 2012). So, my practice may be more likely to engage its graphic design respondents, and perhaps more easily permit better articulated responses about employability. I will outline how epistemological issues have informed my practice, and how that practice permits field-focused conceptions of the graphic design undergraduate's own employability. I argue that this generates tangible outputs relevant to respondents' ways-of-thinking, and provokes individual standpoints through face-to-face probing of visualised thoughts and experiences. I will explain how this, in turn, will develop a gestalt that demonstrates that whilst employability is contingent and complex, the student still has potent agency.

The Gap in Knowledge

Johnston (2003) ascribed specific losses of knowledge around employability, which have been addressed to differing extents in the meantime as described earlier (for instance by Ball, 2010). However, Johnston's (2003) list still provides useful guidance for areas to probe within my inquiry into *current* undergraduates, who are still largely subject to employability initiatives devised by others. Johnston (2003) states:

Graduates [read in my context undergraduates] are not a powerful, organised group so we have very little information from them about:

- their working conditions and culture – levels of 'flexibility' required; levels of autonomy; working culture – values and priorities; working identity (e.g.

professional, casual); workload; stress levels in the job; income; job security/insecurity; future prospects;

- relationships between their higher education and work, as well as other life experiences – relationship between higher education and current work/life in terms of direct or indirect preparation;
- fulfilment issues – the nature and extent of their job satisfaction and commitment; the fulfilment or otherwise of their early expectations; future prospects;
- relationships between what employers want of them and what employers say they want of them.

(Johnston, 2003 p. 419)

What is striking about this list is that the lack of knowledge about current undergraduates is not only within the study of employability, but is also by extension *within* each of the students. Giddens's (1991) elucidates the detriment to undergraduate students who have been encouraged to develop traits of employability, but who have not also been encouraged to reflect on employability's contexts and their own circumstances, contexts, and consequences:

"Self-identity is not a distinctive trait, or even a collection of traits, possessed by an individual. It is the self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of her or his biography." (Giddens, 1991)

In other words, the knowledge gap in employability about undergraduates is not simply an academic lapse, but may be harmful to the formation of self-identity of students. My research targets respondents whilst they still are undergraduate students, and it is hoped that the research will reveal individuals' internalised conceptions of:

- flexibility, autonomy, desired working culture, values and priorities;
- future prospects and levels of security;
- relationships between work and other life experiences; and
- fulfilment issues.

The study encourages a deeper reflection than acquisition of abilities and skills by employing the current epistemologies of the respondent group – looking to the ways of knowing of students of graphic design.

Ways of Knowing

I have stated the purpose of my study is to engage graphic design students with their own employability – within, but towards the end of, their undergraduate studies. I have also acknowledged the innate tension within design education around engagement with employability, and here I outline the potential productivity of that tension. The underlying foundation of this friction is replicated in other subject areas within the academy. For instance, Ashe (2012 p. 129) describes a fundamental mismatch between ‘bolt-on’ philosophies for employability and critical subject areas:

[This]... approach to ‘delivering’ employability training to students is particularly problematic for lecturing staff working in critical subject areas such as politics and sociology. (Ashe, 2012 p. 129)

Because this programme involves social critical studies, it is argued that employability can only be confluent presented to students as a construct worthy of critical study. She relates this difficulty for those subject areas as being: “disciplines that have a history of focusing on the political, economic and ideological causes of unemployment.” (Ashe, 2012 p. 129) I relate this as being relevant too to graphic design. That is because it too frequently takes a pedagogically critical stance on societal issues, and is often in practice an instrument of challenge to such issues (the graphic impact of the typical protest march, political graffiti, flags and political campaigns demonstrate this). Ashe (2012) outlines the aim of the critical studies project at University of Ulster to:

... harness the critical subject content of political theory to provide a framework for year one undergraduate students to consider issues relating to graduate employment, and to illustrate the utility of critical theory. (Ashe, 2012 p. 133)

Ashe is elaborating that the project used the ways of knowing within critical studies to frame employability, and later describes the significant success of the project. The students initially went from: “a limited understanding of the knowledges surrounding employability” (Ashe, 2012 p. 135), to: “a clear understanding of dominant and critical approaches to graduate employability.” (Ashe, 2012 p. 135), but more significantly, consequently: “... students worked out strategies to increase their chances of securing graduate employment...” (Ashe, 2012 p. 135)

This is significant, because not only are critical approaches to employability (in which students are exposed to its conflicts and discourses) more consistent with the subject areas own critical epistemologies (rather than ‘bolted-on’), but also such an approach increases prospects of employment for students. That is because: “students were able to consider their [own] employability in relation to different discourses including dominant and critical discourses.” (Ashe, 2012 p. 135) In other words, self- contextualisation of employability may enhance individual employability. Ashe (2012) provides an indication that using the epistemologies and pedagogies of a subject area is likely to yield more productive discourses of employability.

So whilst there are significant differences in execution (and with the year of undergraduate study targeted), my study mirrors the essential ethos of Ashe’s (2012) criticality – but within the ways of knowing of graphic design. Graphic design educators can be reassured that such an examination of employability sits within graphic design’s critical contexts. Ashe (2012) infers that it may yield richer outcomes for my study too – provided I employ a critically-coherent practice that is consistent with graphic design’s epistemologies.

Engaging Design Epistemologies

That critically-coherent practice is graphic elicitation, one form of investigative methods known as projective techniques, described by Allen (1958) in Bagnoli (2009) to...

... include any set of procedures which, being minimally structured, allow people to impose their own forms of organization, bringing into expression their needs, motives, emotions and the like (Allen, 1958). (Bagnoli, 2009 p. 548)

Graphic elicitation offers the light scaffold implied by Allen (1958) to engage the critical ways of knowing for graphic design students, and in the socially-complex arena of employability has a further benefit, reiterated by Bagnoli (2009), that it:

encourage[s] thinking ‘outside the box’ [leading to] generating new ways of interrogating and understanding the social. (Bagnoli, 2009 p. 548)

Graphic elicitation is additionally described as having the ability to “...encourage the expression of creativity and imagination” (Catterall and Ibbotson, 2000), though I will deal with these claims later. In building to a definition of graphic elicitation, Crilly

(2006) frames it as overarching two other concepts. The first is graphic ideation, said to be: “an iterative process in which ideas are visually expressed, tested and then fed back to the expressive stage” (Crilly et al., 2006 p. 345). There also, a key benefit from Albarn & Smith (1977) is cited as: “the iterative process of structuring ideas and developing representations for those ideas may trigger previously unconsidered notions” (Crilly et al., 2006 p. 345).

There will be more detailed examination of logistics, issues and contexts of production relating to my practice of graphic elicitation later, but next I wish to focus on how it sits within the epistemologies of graphic design both as graphic practice for me and as reflexive graphic practice for respondents.

Signature Pedagogies

Crilly’s assertion about the construction of ideas through artefactual representation has strong resonance for the art & design school environment, and forms the basis of the iterative signature pedagogies in design that inculcate students’ ways of knowing. Sims and Shreeve’s (2012) account of each of the signature pedagogies that they attribute to art and design, whilst not attempting to provide a comprehensive review of how graphic design is taught and learnt, do offer practical hooks for my research. My practice engages those signature pedagogies as its methodological basis – namely: the studio, the brief, the critique, the sketchbook, research, and dialogue & discussion (Sims and Shreeve, 2012). The following text describes how each of these signature pedagogies builds to a rationale for my practice of graphic elicitation. The signature pedagogies are reduced here to: studio, brief, sketch, and dialogue. Sims and Shreeve (2012) additionally propose research as a signature pedagogy. The research component in the context of my study is dually-formed. The first form of research is my own active research and reading into employability, graphic elicitation, and phenomenographic analysis. The second form of research has been conducted by the undergraduate respondents through their accumulation of direct, lived experience. My task is to match the two forms of research. That is, I must identify within each session when each respondent relates conceptions of their experiences that are broadly relevant to employability. By deeper elicitation in those moments, I encourage formation of the richest possible dataset whilst minimising my influence on the substance of each datum.

Studio

Whilst 'studio' may superficially appear to be simply about place, it is rather about milieu (shared culture, outlook, etc.), and about what experiences are encouraged through and by it. The opportunities provided by the studio (and sometimes missed) as a place of productive learning are extensively dealt with by McClean (McClean, 2009). Whilst there are numerous studies arguing the pros and cons of the studio (Schön, 1985; Taylor, 2008; la Harpe and Peterson, 2009; van Dooren et al., 2013), the point here is that it is familiar to target respondents, and a place of their creative production. The key element of using studio (or studio-type space) for my practice is a wish to create "zones of practice" (Schön, 1985 p. 27) for "reflection-in-action" (Schön, 1985 p. 27), since it is these deliberations that form the value of the study. My institution briefing to tutors emphasised the requirement:

... a location available... capable of a 2 x 2 metre floor space... A quiet location is best, as the sessions will be recorded. (Extract from *Life Drawing Praxis – Life Drawing Institution Briefing p. 1*)

Sims and Shreeve (2012) indicate a core notion of the studio: "Notable and distinctive is that visible and material artefacts often form the basis for discussion" (p. 60), which is why the practice of my study requires the creation by the respondent, with structural scaffolding by the researcher, of "visible and material artefacts". This element of graphic practice is described in my typed participant briefing:

...You will use giant permanent markers to sketch responses (absolutely no drawing ability required) onto gold survival blankets... what you sketch is less important than the conversation we have around it... (Extract from *Life Drawing Praxis – Life Drawing Participant Information and Consent p. 1*)

My rationale is to engage the designerly ways-of-knowing familiar to respondents, particularly Schön's (1987; 1995) "knowing-in-action" and "reflection-in-action". The concluding sentence indicates my ambition that participants benefit too from the process:

...You are at a unique point in your undergraduate studies, and it may be useful to reflect on these issues whilst you have the final year ahead... (Extract from *Life Drawing Praxis – Life Drawing Participant Information and Consent p. 1*)

The study's practice also subsequently reaches to Schön's (1987) "reflection on reflection" in its commentary of the entirety of the study's multiple artefacts. In order to render "visible and material artefacts" (Sims and Shreeve, 2012 p. 60) the study must reach beyond mere accumulations of incidental research matter produced solely for analysis. It must produce something in which both respondent and researcher have a stake. The conduct of the study must demonstrate to respondents a valuing of what they produce and a respect for the process of production. How this is achieved will be discussed further in the 'Sketch' section.

Brief

Whilst studies involving human participants are ethically obliged to provide an overview of the study with an indication of risk, this research went beyond that in several respects. The early communications with respondents (described already established the expectation to produce a graphic output on the rather unique (for this context) medium of a large survival blanket. At each session, the respondent was also asked to sign the brief to indicate understanding.

Following welcomes, the brief was read aloud, so was for every respondent verbally identical. This (combined with the earlier participant briefing and later in-session briefing) detailed so specifically the artefact and production of the artefact that it effectively constituted a graphic brief, of which respondents were already very familiar. So, it highlights to respondents the medium, the process, constraints, the artistic ownership and graphic choices, and that the graphic itself has a potential audience.

You have a 2m x 1.5m sheet before you. [medium and scale] I'm about to ask some questions, and want you to sketch your responses on the sheet [process of production] whilst explaining what you're sketching...

... It is your graphic sketch [artistic ownership], so your decision which orientation you will use for it [graphic choices]. There will be two distinct elements to this sketch [constraints]...

... This sheet is potentially for display [audience]. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Life Drawing Prologue & Overview p. 1*)

The in-practice instructions continue this briefing using familiar graphic terminologies:

Remembering that the sheet is for us to talk about both your graphic design education and also your future creative and professional life, how big [scale] is your graphic design education and what shape [symbolology] is it? We'll be looking to sketch further [constraint] within that shape later. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Life Drawing Domains*)

Further cues were available for each of the verbal briefing points. These cues increase in levels of guidance. So, level 'A' provides open guidance; level 'B'; provides conceptual exemplars; and level 'C' provides at least one specific example. Each 'level' of cue was delivered only upon further querying by the respondent. The cues are discipline (graphic design) oriented. The above example can be seen in the first cue-set of *Life Drawing Praxis – Life Drawing Domains*. This communication with students forms an assertive set of instructions. Respondents would recognise this as 'the briefing' signature pedagogy of graphic design.

Sketch

Sims and Shreeve (2012) suggest that: "Documenting one's thought processes visually is a requirement in most art and design teaching situations, and is most often produced as a sketchbook" (Sims and Shreeve, 2012 p. 62), and it is this 'visual thought process' of the sketchbook (rather than literal medium) that I mine in this research. So, whilst the session has an aim of the production of an artefact, it borrows too from the language of the sketchbook. This emphasises its underlying paradoxical constraint that it is not only a graphic production, but also a process of visualised thinking. This paradox is not strenuous for the graphic design student, however, since he or she will recognise this combination of graphic artefact with supporting visual thought process (sketches) from the dominant assessment processes within contemporary graphic design education. Cunliffe (2005) describes how such assessment: "...requires evidence for both 'knowing how' and 'knowing that'" (Cunliffe, 2005 p. 205), but also cautions that this is not demonstrated by: "[only] the inclusion of copies of images and postcards and the like... stuck into sketchbooks" (Cunliffe, 2005 p. 205). In other words, it is the pro-active thinking process – the doing – of the sketch that is useful, not merely its visuality. Schenk

(2014) verifies that drawing on paper within design is a common adjutant for thinking:

traditional, paper-based forms of drawing are still used by many designers and are particularly crucial as an aid to creative thinking. (Schenk, 2014 p. 42)

The time constraints of each elicitation compel the graphic outputs to be of a sketched quality, and there are indicators to the respondents to not get overly-transfixed on graphic precision. The golden blankets on which marks are made are densely-folded, which when unfolded form a dense regular grid with random deviations and crude indentations and ruffles on the sheet. Whilst the concept of grid is familiar to the graphic design student, this is not the grid of crisp virgin computer screen with its lightly tinted criss-cross lines formed from high-resolution pixels. The medium of this grid is instead haptically-rich – bumps and folds – and it is sonorously-abundant too. It rustles not only as the chunky black pen makes its crude marks; but even when untouched, wafted by invisible air flows. Olfactory sense is also struck in this practice by pungent aromas of ink released from the thick barrel of the pen to its tip. The large golden sheets of this study are the epitome of Jacques Derrida's (2005) homage:

Paper echoes and resounds... Beneath the appearance of a surface, it holds in reserve a volume, folds, a labyrinth whose walls return the echoes of the voice or song that it carries itself... Paper is utilized in an experience involving the body, beginning with hands, eyes, voice, ears; so it mobilizes both time and space. (Derrida, 2005)

The language used by Derrida might appear florid, and yet this interaction with the blankets – my paper – and mental and verbal reflection of its surface marks constructs what Schön terms “the language of designing.” (Schön, 1983 p. 80). It is a rich basis for dialogue.

Dialogue

Schön (1983 p. 271) observes that: “Drawing and talking are parallel ways of designing, and together make up... the language of designing.” (Schön, 1983 p. 80). It is the “language of designing” that my study is utilising for its dialogue and discussion, because the final year undergraduate designer has learned to be

conversant in that language, so is therefore likely to better expound his or her ideas through it. Schön elaborates the characteristic dependencies of this language:

The verbal and non-verbal are closely connected... lines are unclear in their reference except in so far as [the designer] says what they mean. His words are obscure except insofar as [one] can connect them with the lines of the drawing. [The designer's] talk is full of deictic utterances – “here,” “this,” “that” – which [one] can interpret only by observing his movements. (Schön, 1983 p. 81)

So not only is this language verbal and graphic, the requisite explicatory movements cause it to be performative too – by both parties within the conversation, since both must deictically reference (point or gesture) to the drawing in explanation and querying of meaning. In the logistics of this research, the blanket captures the drawing, and the audio recorder captures the talking, but the language (the togetherness of the two) occurs only at the time of production. That moment represents a ‘live’ performance in Schön’s “language of designing”. It is not an instrument of the passive researcher (if there were ever such a thing) who might assert absolute objectivity from respondents, and analyse discourse only retrospectively. My practice is, rather, a true in-the-moment experience between respondent and researcher, built upon eliciting the respondent’s conceptions around employability within the established epistemologies of my respondents. It is epistemologically confluent with its graphic design student respondents.

In Summary

In this chapter, I have demonstrated how employability – whilst pursued within higher education as a settled construct – is broadly contested in its value, nature, scope and measurement. I outlined how employability is thought by some, when presented without context, even to cause harm to students. And that there is a convincing body of evidence that current discourses of employability lack the perspective of perhaps its most important stakeholder – the current student.

I have outlined how the epistemologies of ‘critical subject’ areas (and perhaps all higher education learning) are deemed incompatible, or at least to have considerable friction, with dominant discourses of employability – unless these discourses are systematically revealed to students through appropriate pedagogy. I provided an exemplar of epistemologies within a critical subject area permitting

examination of employability, which led to a greater understanding of employability's contingencies, and thereby to a more effective appreciation of students' own employability.

I have argued that graphic design has the qualities and contexts of such a 'critical subject' area, and that by utilising the epistemologies of graphic design, its undergraduates may similarly reveal more about employability and their own experience of it.

Chapter 2: Concerning Practice

Introducing my Practice

This chapter argues that my practice of graphic elicitation not only aligns well with design pedagogies, but is very appropriate to the visualised outputs of the study's respondents' subject area – graphic design. In addition, 'the visual' forms an integral part of one's identity, including the identity issues of one's employability. This means that graphic elicitation is both appropriate to the study's respondents and to the domain of enquiry, and may be more likely to yield rich results than verbal alone. Graphic elicitation is the form of my *inquisitive* graphic practice, and is described in detail within this chapter.

Remaining chapters detail my *expositional* graphic practice, in which the outcomes of my graphic enquiry and phenomenographic approach are related and assessed. This graphic exposition also consists of an interface at <http://lifedrawing.graphics>, which provides a proof-of-concept interactive probe into the five emergent 'outcome spaces'. An outcome space is the ultimate destination of phenomenographic enquiry, the theory and practice of which is detailed in Chapter 3. The outcome spaces of my research are provided in the final chapter, where each outcome space consists of a 'referential overview' table a 'structural overview' diagrammatic figure, and supporting prose providing detail and analysis.

So, the elements of my practice are:

- practical exploration of the mechanisms and capacities of graphic elicitation situated within a practical enquiry about employability, indicated by the productivity of:
 - the large-scale golden artefacts drawn by my respondents; and
 - the anonymised transcripts of the verbal record of our elicitation sessions.
- practical exploration of the mechanisms and capacities of phenomenography to reveal students' ways of experiencing employability, indicated by the breadth and richness of:
 - the forty-eight graphic and verbal extracts that formed the core of my phenomenographic analysis;
 - the twelve rigorously-detailed 'readings' that described my own familiarisation with my data;

- the intermediate formation of data known as ‘pools of meaning’ in phenomenography (in sticky-note form on boards, and extracted to the computer) that assisted my journey to my outcome space;
- my supporting proof-of-concept interactive interface at <http://lifedrawing.graphics> that permits probing of the prime analysed artefacts, extracts, and transcripts; and
- the exposition above of my five outcomes spaces with their constituent twenty-eight categories of description.

Whilst my conclusions may prove of interest to other practitioners, this then is somewhat of a personal quest to examine the potential yield of my graphic inquisitive practice, and to locate that within a suitable analytical approach that respects both the graphic and verbal – again, through situated practice. The significance of my practice is assessed in the final chapter’s conclusions, the ultimate arbiter being whether my graphic elicitation and phenomenographic practice has revealed the sought-after graphic design undergraduate contributions to discourses of employability.

The remaining part of this chapter focuses on my initial inquisitive graphic practice. Graphic elicitation has been used in various studies, but there is frequent obfuscation around its mechanisms and rationales for use. So, it is appropriate in this chapter to explore previous inquiries into graphic elicitation and projective techniques. This will consciously reveal the benefits and issues of the technique in relation to this specific inquiry. There have been claims relating to benefits pertaining to the creativity of visual methods, and counter-claims of lack of rigour. This chapter elucidates how this study’s practice derives not from any correlation or connection to ‘creativity’ but by graphic elicitation’s appropriate use of the visual and drawing, and its probing dialogue that challenges the respondent to explain and reflect. I will describe here how this study theatricalises the scale, tools, and materials of its graphic elicitations to generate outputs that are not mere detritus of a research process but are valued artefacts. This results in a practice where the study’s responses explore dimensions of employability, but are not generated solely in the normative language and syntax of employability. This supports the ambition of this graphic practice to contribute to the discourse of employability. There have been claims that purport visual methods as a shortcut to the thoughts of respondents, or

that the 'true' voice of respondents is revealed, so this chapter examines these claims and counter-claims, and particularly heeds the criticisms and warnings about such methods. This study accepts its outputs as somewhat co-created between respondents and researcher, but it must be stressed that the researcher role was in providing a structure for eliciting and probing content rather than affecting content. In the interests of openness, I provide a detailed frank examination of the contexts of production within this study's practice. In this way, the emergent themes and artefacts may be accepted as expanding discourse whilst acknowledging factors within and around the discursive environment.

Graphic Elicitation

The method of this study fits within a broad genre of studies that "employ visual means of representation" (Buckingham, 2009 p. 633). This "shift to the visual" is often heralded as a recent turn within qualitative methods, and yet Buckingham points out that: "... it is worth noting that such a shift has been repeatedly proclaimed across the past several decades." (Buckingham, 2009 p. 633). There is nothing revolutionary about using visual methods, as they have become established practice across human science and humanities disciplines (Buckingham, 2009; J. Prosser and Loxley, 2007). Pink (Pink, 2013) observes, though, that:

The visual is... inextricably interwoven with our personal identities, narratives, lifestyles, cultures and societies, as well as with definitions of history, time, space, place, reality and truth. (Pink, 2013 p. 1)

Though Pink is building a justification for visual ethnography, my study's graphic method leans on the same rationale – more emphatically in the context of final-year graphic design undergraduates, whom one would expect might have some sympathy with Pink's (2013) espousal of the power of the visual. And yet, the stance of me as researcher in my study is far from the pseudo-objective on-looker, and the visual productions are far from snaps of a reality-in-motion suggested by visual ethnography. Rather, this study's exaggerated form of graphic elicitation places me as an usher or escort. I guide the respondent to their own performance of their own visual output, albeit the exaggerated factor distinguishes it even more from normative forms of graphic elicitation.

Graphic elicitation has been used to elicit expert processes, strategy, and roadmaps from adults – often rooted in some form of visual template. In this form of elicitation, existing visuals are used to stimulate data collection, frequently augmented with mark-making by the respondent. This was common to most practice described in Umoquit et al's (2011) comprehensive meta-analysis of previous efforts which used: "diagrams as a data collection tool" (Umoquit et al., 2011 p. 1). They analysed 80 of the 2690 examples. Whilst a significant number, the authors are keen to stress that:

The use of diagrams in earlier stages of the research process (i.e. to collect data) is a relatively new method and is not a common data collection approach at present. However, their use is developing in multiple disciplines... (Umoquit et al., 2011 p. 2),

The consequence of this relative novelty for a practitioner is that:

... there lacks a strong "supportive structure" ... for researchers choosing this method... The use of diagrams in data collection has developed independently in multiple disciplines under a number of different names, making knowledge transfer regarding this technique difficult. (Umoquit et al., 2011 p. 2),

I will describe later how Umoquit et al's term 'diagramming' suggests a more structural form of graphic production than my own intentions (which I described as 'drawing'). Nevertheless, their findings are relevant in several regards. The field that had most employed this visual methodology was education, within which sit both my respondents and the topic of employability. Researchers provided two broad categories of rationale. The first was that it was apt to the topic under investigation, since: "research has established the usefulness of diagrams in collecting data about research subjects' knowledge or cognitive structures" (Umoquit et al., 2011 p. 3). The second rationale for the use of graphic elicitation was: "because of the benefits previous studies found regarding the quality and uniqueness of the collected dataset" (Umoquit et al., 2011 p. 3). One of the benefits listed is that 'unprompted' drawing: "minimized the influence of the researcher on the participant and their responses." (Umoquit et al., 2011 p. 3). Other benefits said to be uncovered by studies include:

that diagramming is a reflective tool for the research subjects... [and since] ... diagrams can represent both concrete and theoretical notions... diagramming offers a more holistic coverage of the topic... with more uncensored and

unique data gathered... than more traditional qualitative data collection methods. (Umoquit et al., 2011 p. 3).

These are a good number of claims about the benefits of diagramming, but the more open thrust of my practice has been less studied. My graphic elicitation employs drawing onto over-sized blank sheets with young adults – hoping to elicit not just cognition, but also affective conceptions. Kearney and Hyle (2004) indicate that this more human-centred relativist approach may be productive (though using neither ‘graphic’ nor ‘elicitation’ in their work).

Bagnoli (2009) also summarises her successful use of three distinct types of graphic elicitation. These were the self-portrait, the relational map, and the timeline. For each, the technique was aligned to her aim. The self-portrait’s aim to: “encourage the narration of a holistic picture of identities” (Bagnoli, 2009 p. 565) is most relevant to my study since, though my study does not ask for self-portraits, the subject indefatigably regards ‘the self’ of each respondent. Bagnoli (2009) goes on to relate how this may be better permitted through the visual:

The inclusion of non-linguistic dimensions in research, which rely on other expressive possibilities, may allow us to access and represent different levels of experience. (Bagnoli, 2009 p. 547)

Bagnoli proceeds to grander territory with a succinct summary of the claims of Gauntlett (2007), Prosser & Loxley (2008) and Weber (2007) about communicating through imagery:

The use of visual and creative methods can generally facilitate investigating layers of experience that cannot easily be put into words (Gauntlett, 2007). Images are evocative and can allow access to different parts of human consciousness (Prosser and Loxley, 2008): communicating more holistically, and through metaphors, they can enhance empathic understanding, capture the ineffable, and help us pay attention to reality in different ways, making the ordinary become extraordinary (Weber, 2008). (Bagnoli, 2009 p. 548)

I will return to Gauntlett’s (2007) opening later, though profess no expertise with which to evaluate Prosser & Loxley’s (2008) matters of human consciousness. But Bagnoli’s summation of Weber (2007) appears both grounded and plausible, since both drawing and speaking together self-evidently widens the communication, and my study does actively rely on metaphor and (by the scale and nature of the golden

blankets) does attempt to make whatever emerges more 'extraordinary'. Given the lack of voice in students' current 'reality' of employability, it would also be gratifying if the method were to help the respondent students express their reality.

Precise definitions of graphic elicitation and how it is achieving its claims are scarcer, but if we break it down into its components, this may inform us. Umoquit et al point out that:

...diagramming, mapping and drawing are often used interchangeably, with no common interdisciplinary understanding of what they mean. (Umoquit et al., 2013 p. 12)

They propose "diagrammatic elicitation" as an arch term for a particular range of graphic elicitations, in the hope that:

well-defined terminology will assist the fragmented research community to connect with each other to share best practices and developments. (Umoquit et al., 2013 p. 12)

They are attempting to bring to the surface distinguishing characteristics of graphic elicitation, often cited as prima-facie valid instrument – with little justification or explanation of its use nor the idiosyncrasies of that particular use (Stevens et al., 2008). Stevens's (2008) uses carefully-prepared diagrams in its graphic elicitation, prioritising the visuality of the provocation towards the respondents, with the respondents adding marks to the diagram presented to them. The resulting graphic, with the visual provocation dominant, is simply a step on the way to further analysis, with no inherent interest in the produced artefact except as an illustration of method within subsequent writing. Umoquit et al (2013) refer to this use of a pre-provided provocation as:

... researcher-led diagrammatic elicitation, where the researcher draws the diagram during the data collection process for discussion or participants edit a researcher prepared diagram. (Umoquit et al., 2013 p. 1)

My study uses a form of elicitation closer to the other form of diagrammatic elicitation proposed by Umoquit et al (2013): "participant-led diagrammatic elicitation, where participants create original diagrams" (Umoquit et al., 2013 p. 1), though it is yet further towards the open-ended interpretations that Banks (2015) proposes in his scale of types of visual representations. In Banks's (2015) scale,

diagrams occupy centre ground (at one end extremely verbal, and the opposite extremely graphical). Whilst diagrams and words are not vetoed in my study, the encouragement is towards drawing freely. Where respondents decide to use words and diagrammatic conventions, there is no compulsion for them to have regard for the intelligibility of the graphic by the casual observer. Varga-Atkins and O'Brien (2009) graphically codify the differences between diagram and drawing (Varga Atkins and O'Brien, 2009 p. 56). They assert that in diagrams: "spatial arrangement of signs usually carries meaning" (Varga Atkins and O'Brien, 2009 p. 56), but that in drawing: "spatial arrangement may or may not carry meaning". These statements form the only significant dispute I have with Varga-Atkins and O'Brien, where I contend that within diagrams and drawings spatial arrangement *always* carries meaning. This is supported by Massironi and Bruno's (2001) postulation that:

A surface is a visual analog of abstract space. Drawing lines and points on a surface make spatial relations explicit. (Massironi and Bruno, 2001)

In fitting with Massironi and Bruno, I would replace Varga-Atkins and O'Brien descriptors: for drawing with: "spatial arrangement may or may not be predetermined"; and for diagramming with "spatial arrangement of signs is often determined by convention or logic". That said, it is clear in any case that my study's elicitation is firmly towards drawing than diagramming, and this is particularly conveyed by Varga-Atkins and O'Brien's contrasting of purpose. For drawing, they described purpose as: "captures essence (a salient feature)" (Varga Atkins and O'Brien, 2009 p. 56) and this is what I have previously described as one of the aims of the study's exaggerated productions: that they have a 'scalability' of reading about them: from individual component (line/ point) with its accompanying verbal explanation right through to the gestalt – the "essence". Individual graphics literally create a bigger picture. This assists the respondent in forming a reflection of the whole. The golden blanket's materiality and visual impact emphatically affirm the blankets as artefacts of contemplation rather than mere detritus of a study method.

Having qualified that at the heart of my form of graphic elicitation is the act of drawing, it is helpful to understanding the effect of drawing. Fortunately, Massironi (2001) impeccably elaborates what drawing is attempting to achieve on a technical level, but further, the richness that it contributes to the research process:

Drawing can be thought of as material transposition of data in which the variable, multifarious matter of represented things is transcribed into a new material medium, the graphic symbol on a surface. To operate this transduction, one needs to make choices, the most obvious on being, as noted previously, that of emphasising certain visual qualities and neglecting others... Thus the representative process is defined by the dialectics of emphasis and exclusion. (Massironi and Bruno, 2001 p. 71)

In other words, drawing is more likely to reveal respondents' hierarchies of *relative* importance than solely verbal responses. In the style of elicitation of my study, with a very large drawing surface accumulating its creator's marks over time, this dialectic is likely to become even more increasingly apparent. Drawing also embeds another rather counter-intuitively positive aspect to data collected:

Fortunately, graphics provide us with figural ambiguity, a tool that is ideally suited to unveil how information is added during perceptual processing. (Massironi and Bruno, 2001 p. 243)

Whilst Massironi is gratified by ambiguity as a mechanism to study visual perception, the 'figural ambiguity' of graphics contributes in my study is a 'check' on what is being espoused by respondents. It provides an opportunity, if needed, to further question the meaning of what is drawn (and how) and what is said (and how), and probe any potential dissonances between them. The data is potentially enriched by intentionally injecting scope for ambiguity. This 'dialectic of emphasis and exclusion' and ambiguity are so important because they reveal how the drawer locates his or herself in a wider sense, especially when the drawing process is being observed, and the subject of the drawing is being narrated by the drawer:

For graphic analysis, all we need to note is that the actions being performed by a drawer are structured by the social act being carried out and that this structure of content and order is elaborated by prosodics; and further that it is often supported by extra-graphic communication, the speech and gesture that accompany it. (van Sommers, 2009 p. 262)

What is emerging here is the importance of the act of drawing. It is not merely incidental to graphic elicitation. By making marks on the surface in a certain way, something is betrayed or elaborated of the drawer – not unlike the 'non-verbal communication' that accompanies speech. Van Sommers elaborates this by two examples of the act itself of drawing:

Modulations of graphic production of the sort we have been exploring are either graphic social acts themselves or contribute to graphic social acts. The man who gives the tradesperson a meticulous drawing is issuing a request for a meticulous job... The woman who drew her face and then drew over the head line after dark line of shading to express her depression was incorporating in the monotonous repetitive action something more than the dark area itself could provide. (van Sommers, 2009 p. 265)

Van Sommers is saying that drawing, and the detail of how the drawing is done, is as societally significant as speech and how someone talks. Even if, as in this example, it is simply an outline specification for work, some things are emphasised and some are not. This is the graphic equivalent of non-verbal communication – different for each person. So, it must be analysed with awareness of the possibility of misinterpretation. We would not expect to be able to analyse the meaning of what someone says by solely using linguistics, and Van Sommers remarks similarly of the wider contexts of drawing a graphic:

... to understand grassroots graphic productivity, one has to pay as much attention to Bourdieu, Berger, and Raymond Williams as to technical reports on the psychology of perception and skill (van Sommers, 2009 p. 244).

Vinter (2009) encourages this analogy to speech even more, by using the terminology we reserve for language :

Syntax in drawing refers to the way the movements are executed and ordered in a sequence (the 'how' of drawing), while semantics deals with what is depicted in terms of symbolic content (the 'what' of drawing). (Vinter et al., 2009 p. 140)

Bagnoli (2009) says of research using drawing during interviews (with children) that:

In these contexts, it is not the drawings as such that constitute the data, but the whole process of their production (Morrow, 1998). The focus here is on children's own meanings, rather than on interpreting drawings on the basis of some pre-existing theory. (Bagnoli, 2009 p. 549)

This is equally relevant to the undergraduate students of my study, and that is why the drawings will be interpreted within the wider context of how they were drawn and for what context (syntax) than merely by their semantics. Van Sommers (2009) terms the syntax of the drawing 'prosodic features'. He provides a useful list to be considered in an analysis of drawing that goes beyond the traditional semantic interpretation of many graphic elicitations:

... slow speed, large size, thickness of line (distinctness), precision, detail and repetition of detail, continuity (as opposed to interruption), smoothness (as opposed to tremor), precise overdrawing, and feathering as a contrastive device. To these we can add certain kinesic elements such as active reorientation of the body or the paper. (van Sommers, 2009 p. 267)

These might be thought particularly relevant in my study, where the graphic method of the elicitation has been emphasised by an over-sized writing surface; a surface with heavily folded contours that even has clear sonorous qualities; and a drawing instrument for which a warning has been issued to the drawer of its flow and permanence. The dynamics of production are thus emphasised too – these qualities are part of what I term the ‘theatricalisation’ of the method – the signalling to the respondent that we are in a performance of graphic practice.

Contexts of Production

The process of conducting this research has developed in me a strengthened critique of any participative research method: that each has more potential contexts of production than might be acknowledged even by the author(s). And yet, so fruitful has been this research that I assert that it is not the contexts of production that are problematic, but an author’s intransigence in assertively foregrounding them. That is why it is important that my thesis surfaces the contexts of production of this specific implementation of graphic elicitation. I hope this permits more open consideration of inquisitive graphic practice by other practitioners, and that this reflexivity assists in my analysis of the undergraduate respondents’ contributions being valued as a new contribution to discourse of employability in higher education.

Graphic elicitation strikes the signature pedagogies of graphic design (and therefore utilises its established epistemologies) in the form of studio, brief, sketch and dialogue, and potentially reveals more through the act of drawing. I purposely locate this as visual, rather than creative, method. By relative novelty, visual research methods are often loosely conflated with ‘creative research methods’ – for instance in the assertion that: “creative and visual research methods give people the opportunity to communicate different kinds of information” (Gauntlett, 2007). I agree with Buckingham’s (2009) opinion that:

Collapsing very different types of research together into the broad category of ‘creative’ or ‘visual’ research is, to say the least, unhelpful. (Buckingham, 2009 p. 635)

And I welcome Gaunlett’s (2007) subsequent focus on elaboration of mechanism:

If participants are invited to spend time in the reflective process of making something... they have the opportunity to consider what is particularly important to them before they are asked to generate speech.” (Gauntlett, 2007)

This study makes no claims for creativity, nor the promises of ‘creative research methods’. Buckingham, by placing quotation marks around the ‘creative’ of his paper’s title (Buckingham, 2009) hints at the dispute and arguments around the construct of creativity and its models (Lloyd and Jones, 2013; Welch and Loy, 2013; Wong and Siu, 2012; Wagner, 2009; Dineen and Collins, 2005). This is adequately summarised by Wagner’s submission (2009) that:

Creativity is a beloved non-word, an almost messianic formulation; one of those public screens onto which everyone can project almost everything. It is a term coined to offer hope and positive expectation; a catchword to employers and a must in job application letters. (Wagner, 2009)

I acknowledge that my study’s respondents are within the realm of the frequently-termed ‘creative industries’ and that the aims of the study align with at least three of the five categories of ‘creativity tools’ proposed by Lau et al (Lau et al., 2009 p. 73). Yet, I argue that my study’s visual research method is apt not by conformance with the “widely accepted definition of creativity” (Wong and Siu, 2012 p. 439), but rather by alignment with the epistemologies, pedagogies and practices that its final-year graphic design undergraduate respondents have routinely encountered.

This partially addresses some of Buckingham’s (2009) concerns about data generated from visual research methods, as he soberly asks:

Are such data necessarily more truthful than data gathered using other approaches? Whose ‘voice’ do they actually represent? And how are we to interpret or analyse them? (Buckingham, 2009 p. 634)

In response, I assert that my method of exaggerated graphic elicitation is appropriate by its process of graphic production (apt design), by its encouragement to reflect on the production (reflexivity), and by the results of the production (graphic

artefacts within the respondents' own subject area of graphic design). The method is not a 'creative' flourish, but based on evidence of effect and affect; and my research claims conceptions rather than 'truths'. "How are we to interpret" (p. 634) will be discussed later. Regarding voice, my research acknowledges the strictly delineated (see *Graphic Elicitation with Respondents* p. 3) interaction between me as researcher and the undergraduate respondents. But, nevertheless, each voice added to the dominant stakeholders' voices are assuredly those of the respondent. This graphic-led investigation supplements existing voices with those rarely heard. Buckingham (2009) reproaches that:

Kaplan and Howes (2004) suggest that such an approach is 'empowering' in that it enables young people's voices to be heard directly, in a manner that bypasses existing institutional hierarchies. (Buckingham, 2009 p. 638)

We have seen in this particular case however that, such is the absence of the voice of the current student around employability, the performance of the research at least partially empowers 'young people' *some* voice on conceptions of employability. 'Performance' is used purposely by me here to indicate the potency of doing – of expression and reflection (one's own voice to oneself as respondent), regardless of whether such voices might be later aligned. Having said this, I accept fully Buckingham's (2009) insistence that:

... such methods cannot be seen simply as a means of enabling participants to 'express themselves' or to 'tell their own stories' – or indeed of enabling researchers to gain privileged access to what people 'really' think or feel... This argument typically neglects the formative role (and indeed the responsibility) of the researcher; the generic and formal characteristics of the media that participants are asked to employ; and the participants' understanding both of the context and aims of the research itself, and of the media that are used. (Buckingham, 2009 p. 635)

To portray graphic elicitation as aligned to the ways of knowing (and expressing) in graphic design, but to ignore contexts of production would be neglectful, and here the detailed practice of the study should be elaborated – since it frames the contexts of production. I heed particularly Bragg's (2007) warning that previous claims of approaches like mine are:

symptomatic of broader limitations that characterize the emphasis on 'student voice' in educational settings (Bragg, 2007 in Buckingham, 2009 p. 638)

Method

Each respondent participated in a one-to-one graphic elicitation with me (targeted 35-45 minutes, though sometimes longer). It was conducted in private, either in a reserved section of a larger room with significant buffer zone, or as sole-occupants of the space.

Several dimensions of the construct of employability were presented to respondents as provocation. The respondent sketched visualisations whilst explaining what they were drawing. There was significant probing of what was related by each respondent during the session, audio-recorded using a Marantz Professional PMD661 MKII. During earlier trial with students at my own institution, video-recording was forsaken for audio because of the intrusiveness of shooting video whilst maintaining respondent engagement.

Locations

Eight art and design institutions across the United Kingdom were selected for their geographic diversity, ensuring coverage across the four devolved administrations. A visit was made to each between October and November 2014. A brief analysis of each institution features in *Life Drawing Praxis – Participating Institutions*. The UK is a complex political entity composed of several territories with devolved governments and assemblies, with increasingly divergent political and social ambitions around higher education. Depending in which of these territories a student resides and in which he or she studies, student-payable fees range from zero (resident of Scotland) to several-tens-of-thousands of pounds (resident of England) over the course of a degree. All students are entitled to loans to cover any fees they must pay. So, whilst each studies graphic design within the UK, the fiscal burdens vary by the geopolitics of both respondents' home and study locations, forming a distinct context of production.

There were locational logistical difficulties, since the nature of the setting within each institution was not ascertained until immediately prior to each session. The difficulties included building services and other ambient noises obscuring respondents in the sound recording, but included too the sonorous choice of materials for the elicitations. The location within each institution is also significant contextually – they are in large part the normative places of graphic production or

critique for the students (the 'studio' of the signature pedagogies), and yet the locations are simultaneously not only places of critique (which might be productive for the dialogue of the elicitation) but are also places of assessment. These associations with the studio may be less productive, since, as Harland:

Art and design student outputs in the UK are mainly coursework related; it is common for the student and the tutor to hold discussions through critique sessions and informal studio settings. (Harland, 2015 p. 1)

And even more problematic that: "the resulting 'artwork' may be assessed in a studio setting through a discussion among lecturers 'situated within its disciplinary context' (Orr, 2007)". (Harland, 2015 p. 2) This means that the artefactual nature of the study's drawing, and graphic elicitation's dialogue and probing within the studio setting may be tainted by the power differentials of the student-tutor and student-assessor relationships. The study attempts to ameliorate this in several regards. Participant communication emphasises that it is not a critique, but a conversation:

I hope that the process itself, whilst relatively brief, may be potentially useful to you – what you sketch is less important than the conversation we have around it. (Extract from *Life Drawing Praxis – Participant Information and Consent p. 1*)

The briefing is also careful to de-couple the student's academic outputs from this research output, in providing:

... assurances of appropriate anonymity. That includes what you say or sketch being identified neither to your own tutors nor institution – selected extracts will only ever be published without attribution. (Extract from *Life Drawing Praxis – Participant Information and Consent pp. 1-2*)

The assurance of anonymity was structured into the handling of data about respondents, with randomly generated numbers being used to identify respondents, artefacts, and institutions. Respondents were reminded of the purpose of the measures taken to shield their identities – so that they were able to freely graphically relate personal conceptions, but also the aspiration that the graphic elicitation session would be "useful for your contemplation of your own direction." (Extract from *Life Drawing Praxis – Participant Information and Consent p. 2*).

Respondents

At each location, five final-year graphic design undergraduate students were pre-selected by a tutor, who was asked to maximise differences between respondents (according to educators' perceptions):

... having students who have differing aspirations and viewpoints would be helpful. As you know the students, you and your team in agreement with the students are best to make the selection. (Extract from *Life Drawing Praxis – Life Drawing Institution Briefing p. 2*)

By requesting differences even within the sample size of five respondents from each institution, I was accepting that there were no quantitative significances to be drawn from the data, and was instead focusing on the study's goal. In it, employability is positioned as a phenomenon experienced by students, and the study aims to elicit the range – the variations – in the experience of the phenomenon rather than represent the 'voice' of any one respondent. This borrows from the collective-focus of phenomenography, whereby:

Phenomenographic research aims to explore the range of meanings within a sample group, as a group, not the range of meanings for each individual within the group. (Åkerlind, 2012 p. 323)

This meant that in the collation of all eight institutes, the study would more be likely to represent the differing perspectives of the experience of employability by students than represent a supposed common perspective by students, or perspective of any one student. But there is clearly the potential for bias from educator selection, since part of the institution briefing indicated that:

Each of the five students will be asked about how they visualise what they've been through in their higher education, and how they might characterise their potential future endeavours. (Extract from *Life Drawing Praxis – Life Drawing Institution Briefing p. 2*)

It might be thought likely that this would result in a selection of students who were likely to provide only a positive view of their higher education. There were two elements to alleviate the bias. One was the indication in the institution briefing that a student's perspectives will never be identified with their hosting institution:

... institutions will be identified en-masse in acknowledgment of their participation, but will not be individually named in relation to any particular

respondent nor subsequent analysis. (Extract from *Life Drawing Praxis – Life Drawing Institution Briefing p. 2*)

The other mitigating element was targeted to respondents:

What we are about to do is not feedback to your institution. The analysis of this study will look at graphic design education as a whole within all the institutions – not any particular one. If you have particular things – strengths or developmental – that you feel should be fed to your institution, that should be done through their feedback mechanisms. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Life Drawing Prologue & Overview p. 1*)

Though this was also tempered by a note to respondents that they were nevertheless able to be frank about their educational experiences because:

That also means, of course, that what you say here is anonymous. It would be unethical of me to attribute anything you say here back to you or your institution. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Life Drawing Prologue & Overview p. 1*)

Ultimately though, the logistics and costs involved in conducting each of the graphic elicitation sessions created another over-riding factor in selection of respondents:

... being pragmatic, the most important criterion of the five students is that each be reliable enough to turn up for their slot on the day. (Extract from *Life Drawing Praxis – Life Drawing Institution Briefing p. 2*)

This final criterion regarding student reliability was successful in resulting in 37 of the 40 sought-after drawings, but this requirement might be said to taint the subject discourse. Yorke et al (2008) outline a list of 39 ‘aspects of employability’ from a cited project, amongst them being: “Self-management: ability to work in an efficient and structured manner.” Considering that the respondent group are final year undergraduates, the aspect of reliability is, according to Feintuch (1955 p. 17), education’s ‘responsibility’ of ‘moderating’:

The study points up the responsibility of the fields of education and of vocational guidance in preventing and moderating, in young people, the development of negative attitudes which hinder vocational adjustment. (Feintuch, 1955 p. 17)

Given this, it would have been desirable to have included respondents with Feintuch’s ‘attitudes which hinder vocational adjustment’, but the research already

scans for issues of compliance, and in requesting ‘differing aspirations and viewpoints’ reveals a range of attitudes.

Mapping Theoretical Concept to Dimensions

This thesis earlier detailed the fundamentals of employability, and introduced Harvey’s (2001) “correct sequence” (Harvey, 2001 p. 99) of operationalisation of employability. So, it is appropriate in this section concerning practice to describe how and why I determined the dimensions used to frame the provocations within the study’s graphic practice. Those dimensions are:

- Graphic design education;
- Wider life (outside of professional);
- Professional life (and practice);
- Industry or field (wider tenor of practice).

To re-cap, Harvey’s (2001) “correct sequence” begins:

1. Define the theoretical concept.
2. Break it down into dimensions that cover the meaning of the concept.

(Harvey, 2001 p. 99)

Harvey’s purpose was a route from concept to ‘operationalisation’ of employability. My purpose is to generate a set of dimensions that occlude from respondents the ‘theoretical concept’, as discourse of this concept is within existing power relations and models. So, to elicit conceptions that are as little-tainted as possible. In other words, I wish to avoid generating a circularity of argument by probing within the over-arching dimensions of employability, rather than using established terminology (like ‘employability’, ‘skills’, ‘attributes’, etc.).

The contestation of the concept of employability is broad, and dispute extends to the detail of its specific inclusions and exclusions that distinguish it from career planning. Many commentators endow us indications of definitions or meanings, though this is perhaps a particularly British obsession, since Yorke & Knight (2008) note that: “Outside the UK, ‘employability’ is neither widely used nor clearly distinguished from ‘getting a graduate job’.” (Yorke, Knight, et al., 2008 p. 28). But that focus provides the motivation for my study – concern that what employability

has come to represent within UK higher education may neglect the voice of its subjects – *current* students (rather than alumni). Whilst Reddy (2013) suggests that “...there is no single dominant model of employability; a comprehensive model remains elusive.” (Reddy et al., 2013 p. 7), this thesis has already evidenced that there are nevertheless dominant bodies of commentators, and there are some particularly well-known models and stances within those dominant bodies. My dimensions were developed by extraction of the nuances and contexts of the theoretical models and meanings ascribed to employability towards over-arching practical domains. A description of the mapping of selected models and meanings to my four dimensions is contained within Appendix A: “Life Drawing Mappings to Models and Stances of Employability”. The purpose is not an exhaustive critical anthology of employability models and definitions, but rather to illustrate how my dimensions can be used as a framework within which the essence of existing discourses of employability might be ‘agnostically’ investigated, minimising employability’s current terminologies.

Materials and Materiality

The drawing surface is a 2.1 metre x 1.6-metre golden coated survival blanket, of the type usually used at the end of sport marathons, sometimes proprietarily referred to as ‘Mylar’. Visualisation are made using 14 millimetre-nibbed permanent black marker pens. The study used 45 of the tightly-folded golden blankets (such were initial experiments with the material). Three were employed with ‘test respondents’ and 37 used in the graphic sessions. The ‘unfurled’ artefacts were safely sent-back from each location by registered post in oversized padded envelopes. These materials had consequences for the research which were only fully-appreciated at commencement of elicitations, since it became clear that the blankets were extensively manipulated by many participants. This need for handling was created by their scale, and the slower-drying properties of the semi-porous surface and permanence of the thick black ink. The strong olfactory properties of the ink required ventilation. There was only one space where the space was slightly restrictive in these regards (a crit. room rather than studio), but elsewhere respondents were given a choice of working on raised-surface or floor, and openable-windows. These factors emphasised the process of creation of the

artefacts, particularly accentuated where the graphic elicitations were conducted in the student's own graphic design studio or workshop.

Whilst some rationale for the golden blankets was my familiarity of their compact properties before unwrapping (so easing their transport to sites), there were nuanced purposeful factors around their selection. I have already relayed how the material qualities of these blankets emphasise even further Derrida's conception of paper being: "utilized in an experience involving the body, beginning with hands, eyes, voice, ears." (Derrida, 2005) But the meta-context of these specific sheets is relevant too, purposely brought to the attention of participants as:

...gold survival blankets (the type people are wrapped in after marathons to keep their body heat in). (Extract from *Life Drawing Praxis – Life Drawing Participant Information and Consent p. 1*)

The immediate semantic is clear: 'you have survived this far'... perhaps even for the student: "I will survive" (Band and Gaynor, 1999). But there are also semiotic inferences of blankets, and the unfurling of the tight folds within the packaging. Winnicott (1953) uses the blanket as an exemplar of 'transitional object' in the separation of baby from mother. The blanket may be the first 'not-me possession' (Winnicott, 1953 p. 89) of a person – the earliest attachment outside of mother or self. This semiotic might be thought rather significant in a study touching on whole-life themes and transitions, particularly that the blanket presents such an embodied phenomenon – of 'being in'. And the association of the blanket with life-transitions continues too in a person's later experience of being: the comfort blanket sought even post-infancy for soothing; the notion of the 'duvet day' in repairing/ withdrawing from the world; the blanket's strong associations with hospital, surgery and post-trauma; and ultimately even with death itself in the shroud of burial. Metaphorical references abound too, such as Jayne's (1976 p. 57) analysis of the association with slumber and awakening:

Consider the metaphor that the snow blankets the ground... the idea of the earth sleeping and protected by the snow cover until its awakening in spring. All this is packed into the simple use of the word 'blanket' to pertain to the way snow covers the ground. (Jaynes, 1976 p. 57)

And the contrary associations in a different context pointed out by Smith and Simmons (1983):

We can see the difference in the meaning of a metaphor when it is placed in another context by considering the statement, "The thick smog blankets the city." Now, no longer do we think of protection, slumber, and warmth; the "blanket" metaphor now means stifling and suffocation. The metaphor has not changed, but the context has. (K.K. Smith and Simmons, 1983)

The point for my study is not that the use of a blanket has any particular metaphorical, semantic, semiotic or psychological associations for an individual respondent, but that these associations exist, and so must be recognised as a context of production for respondents and me. Similarly, the fact of the blanket's gold-colour, selected by me for its practical contrasting and aesthetic qualities as the base of the resultant artefacts, has associations too with competition, importance, and wealth. And earlier experiments with the blankets focussed on their gloss, reflective qualities and the clear allegory with the cerebral reflection being encouraged. Even the tight folds of the blankets (and their unfurling) are significant for their parabolic context, poetically conveyed by Barnett (1999) in her referencing of the philosopher Deleuze (Deleuze and Bergsonism, 1988):

... this is a space to curl and to clasp, to enclose and to disclose: a space of encounter... living in the world... We are discovering new ways of folding, akin to new envelopments... what always matters is folding, unfolding, refolding... to unfold is to increase, to grow; whereas to fold is to diminish, to reduce, "to withdraw into the recesses of a world". (P. Barnett, 1999)

These suggestions of increasing and growing were emphasised by the unfolding, smoothing and taming of the blankets at the beginning of each session, which became embedded as a somewhat theatrical act. The time required for ink to dry gave time for meta-reflection by respondents (also captured in transcripts), and the co-folding of the completed artefact represented a distinct marking of our 'withdrawal' from the 'space of encounter'. With regard to folds, of particular significance to my assertion that current students have become 'subjects' rather than 'citizens' of employability is Barnett's (1999) presentation of Rajchman's (1993) thoughts:

'... we are "folded" in many entangled, irregular ways, none the same ... and... this "multiplicity" goes beyond what we can predict or be aware of: we

are “folded” in body and soul in many ways and many times over, prior to our being as “subjects” ... but not because we divide into distinct persons or personalities looking for a unity ... rather that our modes of being are “complicated” and “unfold” in such a way that we can never be sure just what manners our being will yet assume’. (P. Barnett, 1999)

These ‘entangled’ and ‘irregular’ traits of the folds did complicate the application of the ink to blankets, with the over-sized pens skipping and hopping over the surface as it was drawn upon by respondents. It gloriously confounded even the most precise respondent’s aspirations to graphical precision, so focussing attention on conveying and describing essence and meaning.

It is obvious, then, that this study’s practice was not the normative process of graphic design in which the paper, ink, and even drawing itself, are disregarded. Rather, my practice has embraced disruptions to inquisition that, whilst designed to align to the epistemologies familiar to the graphic design student, must equally be acknowledged as significantly expanding the contexts of production.

Structure and Control

Varga-Atkins and O’Brien (2009) give pragmatic pointers to aspects of initiating and discharging a graphic elicitation towards “the intended purpose and mode of the graphic elicitation during the data collection stage” (2009 p. 65) Conspicuously absent in the discussion, despite the authors spending some time in readings of the visual and verbal, are the reflexive and visual biographies of the researcher. By this, I mean the extent to which the researcher – here, me – is willing to interrogate visual markings, the degree of experience he or she has in eliciting meanings from others about the visual, the meanings that the researcher ascribes to their own life-experiences around the visual, and whether they ascribe meanings to or refute meanings about implements, paper, and other contexts of creation. This level of researcher reflexivity may appear superfluous to those wishing to ‘simply’ use graphic elicitation or visual methods as an analytical tool, but in being able to use them effectively – these must surely be considered prime concerns. A researcher versed in conversing with their target respondents in Schön’s (1983 p. 271) “language of designing” and generating rich responses is surely able to permit (or even encourage) a greater degree of latitude to respondents in their graphic production than a naive speaker of the “language”. But the researcher should be

careful of pursuing affective matters that positions themselves as a therapist for which they are not qualified.

Seeing

I have already outlined that a primary purpose of this research is to encourage students to *see* an emerging whole, and that *seeing* must be considered central to visual practice. And yet the Oxford English Dictionary has sixteen distinct sub-entries of the use of the verb 'see' (OED Online, 2016), so to affirm 'seeing' something opens a preponderance of meaning. Even those meanings pertaining solely to visual perception are fraught:

...the question of why we see things the way we do in large measure still eludes us: Is it only because of the particular stimulation we receive at our eyes, together with our hard-wired visual system? Or is it also because those are the things we expect to see or are prepared to assimilate in our mind? There have been, and continue to be, major disagreements as to how closely perception is linked to cognition – disagreements that go back to the nineteenth century. (Pylyshyn, 1999 p. 341)

Reflection is centred on respondents' conceptual seeing, whereas visual methods' strongest commonality is an optical seeing. Is it possible, then, that graphic elicitation has simply crudely conflated these meanings of seeing, and that the process of graphic elicitation has little evidence of greater success in its goals than verbal discourse? What people see when they see, after all, is notoriously unreliable:

...values and needs determine how we perceive the world, down to the lowest levels of the visual system... about 300 experiments... showed that perception was infected through and through by the perceiver's beliefs about the world being perceived: hungry people were more likely to see food and to read food-related words, poor children systematically overestimate the size of coins. (Pylyshyn, 1999 p. 342)

In other words, we see what we expect to see. This casts doubt on the revelatory capacity of this form of graphic elicitation, since if respondents draw using their own repertoire, how can they subsequently see anything new in it? The problem for graphic elicitation worsens further, as Pylyshyn (1999) goes on to relate that even knowing the visual trick does not stop us experiencing it. Multiple optical illusions demonstrate this: one line looking longer than another replica by the additions of

arrowhead (Müller-Lyer illusion); altered perceptions of a diagonal line when occluded centrally (Poggendorff Illusion); converging lines affecting the perceptions of size of other lines (Ponzo illusion); and Escher's endless staircases.

So even the act of 'seeing' within the study must be considered a context of production, since the likely effect, applications, and productivity of graphic elicitation, given the problems with this aspect, might be thought weak. But the argument for the effect of this study's use of graphic elicitation lies in its drawing *over a time*, with its production divided into distinct purposeful dimensions of topic. It is not simply an immediate seeing of a drawing by its producer, but the *building* of a drawing towards a later perception at a different scale and density of markings than its production – working towards the seeing of its gestalt. The study's graphic elicitation is targeted at tapping its graphic design undergraduate respondents' ways of knowing, based on their familiarity with the realm of the visual. Nevertheless, any claim to respondent students having 'seen' must be scrutinized carefully within its wider contexts of production.

In Summary

In this chapter, I have demonstrated how graphic elicitation has good alignment with the epistemologies and ways of knowing of a design discipline like graphic design, especially when the artefactual aspects of this projective technique are emphasised during its enactment. I described how this informed my development of a theatricalised form of graphic elicitation as the practice of this study, creating graphics with 37 graphic design final-year undergraduate students from 8 geopolitically diverse art and design institutes. Its purpose was to examine the variety of experiences by students of employability as a phenomenon. The practice of the study proposed and executed a practice that has thus been shown to be appropriate to both the nature of its enquiry – the phenomenon of being subject to the enactments and discourses of the concept of employability – with the ways of knowing of its respondents – undergraduate graphic design students. The next part of this thesis will present and analyse the verbal and graphic artefacts of this practice.

Chapter 3: Concerning Analysis

Phenomenography

As outlined earlier, the underlying approach for collection and analysis of the artefacts and transcripts of this research is based on phenomenography, defined by Tight (2016) as:

... an innovative research design, which aims at identifying and interrogating the range of different ways in which people perceive or experience specific phenomena (Tight, 2016 p. 319)

I have outlined how my selection of respondents, within pragmatic logistical constraints, might tend to broaden those range of conceptions of experiences of employability. But whilst I claim a basis in phenomenography, Tight (2016) proposes it as an:

... overarching approach taken towards a particular research project [that] typically encompasses distinctive methodological and theoretical positions or viewpoints (even if these are not recognised and articulated). (Tight, 2016 p. 319)

There is an inference of ‘all or nothing’ here, but I will adopt more emphatically some aspects of phenomenography than others, using it as ‘an approach’ within which I practice a graphic method. This is consistent with Marton & Booth’s assessment that: “phenomenography is not a method in itself... nor is it a theory of experience... Phenomenography is rather... an approach”. (S. Booth, 1997 p. 111) Given phenomenography’s strong associations with: “ learning and understanding in an education setting” (S. Booth, 1997 p. 111) – I must indicate that my intention is *not* to analyse how ‘deeply-processed’ has been my respondent’s comprehension of employability, but rather expose the *breadth* of conceptions. The provenance and distinctions of phenomenography are not the primary focus of my practice, so are discussed within Appendix B: Provenance and Distinctions of Phenomenography. Suffice to say that my approach aligns most with Martonian phenomenography (Cibangu and Hepworth, 2016 p. 152), and respects the distinctions outlined there of focus on: inclusion, variation, the collective, and second-order perspective.

I have asserted that my objective is eliciting the quiet *voices* of current students as conceptions rather than supposition about employability's objective 'reality'. Marton (1981) elaborates that they:

... represent two different perspectives. In the first and by far the most commonly adopted perspective we orient ourselves towards the world and make statements about it. In the second perspective we orient ourselves towards people's ideas about the world (or their experience of it) and we make statements about people's ideas about the world (or about their experience of it). Let us call the former a first-order and the latter a second-order perspective. (Marton, 1981 p. 178)

The dominant existing discourses are primarily of the first-order perspective – concerned with elaborating absolute aspects of employability. Granted that some research has attempted to illicit student opinion (outlined in *Employability's Student Voice* earlier) – but the focus on alumni who have become employed and/or skills/ attributes questionnaire-type check-lists suggests these too are oriented towards first-order perspective. My own research focuses on the second-order perspective – employability as final-year undergraduate graphic design students describe experiencing it. Phenomenography's principle tenet is the primacy of second-order perspective, albeit that Marton cautions: "both perspectives are complementary... [advocating]... the use of both." (1981 p. 178)

The alignment of this second-order emphasis with my research is accentuated by my practice of graphic elicitation, since it *encourages* an abstraction from literal truths. I do this by posing provocative questions which are clearly based on a perception of the world, such as: "how big is your graphic education and what shape is it?"; and "... what would it look like; where does it start and end; what size is it in relation to the rest of your life?" These are cues to make a mark on the blanket – to draw a representation. It is unequivocal that an empirically-measured unit of length is *not* invited when I ask, "what size?", but rather a visual metaphor or representation. The research method of graphic elicitation, through its encouraged abstraction from first-order 'reality' towards second-order 'ideas', aligns with phenomenography's primary second-order perspective.

For all the illumination of contrasts above, it must be emphasised that a non-dualistic ontology underlies all phenomenography: "There is not a real world 'out

there' and a subjective world 'in here'... It is constituted as an internal relation between them" (Marton and S. Booth, 2013 p. 13). That is rather the point of phenomenography – not to deny that the first-order 'thing' exists, but that it is overlaid by our conception/ perception of what 'it' is:

... thinking is described in terms of what is perceived and thought about; the research is never separated from the object of perception or the content of thought. (Marton, 1986 p. 32)

In other words, phenomenography's second-order perspective does not infer that the thing itself has no substance, but rather that:

There is only one world, a really existing world, which is experienced and understood in different ways by human beings. It is simultaneously objective and subjective. (Marton, 2000 p. 105)

Final-year graphic design undergraduates are my 'human beings', and domains of employability are the 'real existing world'.

Types of Phenomenography

Within phenomenography, there are differences of approach. Marton talks of: "three lines of development" (1986 p. 37), whereas Hasselgren & Beach "tentatively argue" (2006 p. 195) for five different "contexts" of phenomenography which affect the way data is produced, and the way it is related:

- Experimental;
- Discursive;
- Naturalistic;
- Hermeneutic; and
- Phenomenological.

Whilst Hasselgren & Beach provide detail on each, it is their "discursive" (2006 p. 195) context, correlating to Marton's "pure phenomenographic interest" (1986 p. 37), that my research corresponds to most closely since I focus on how respondents *encounter* employability rather than on their comprehension of it. Marton describes this as: "how people conceive of various aspects of their reality" (1986 p. 38), and Hasselgren & Beach refer to it as: "a form of phenomenography which [is] not directly related (experimentally or otherwise) to an evaluation of the outcomes of specifically pre-directed learning" (2006 p. 197). The latter go on to note that:

“Discursive Phenomenography might be viewed as the least sophisticated way of doing phenomenography.” (2006 p. 197). Its simply-codified steps – conversation> transcription> compilation> analysis> conceptions (2006 p. 197) – nevertheless provide me with clear direction.

Ways of Experiencing

Linder & Marshall sum-up concisely that: “in phenomenography the object of research is the variation in ways of experiencing a phenomenon.” (Linder and Marshall, 2003 p. 272), so: “the unit of phenomenographic research is a way of experiencing something.” Marton & Booth (1997). This appears straightforward, but terminology within phenomenography has specific precision outside of the commonplace. ‘Experiencing’ is the epitome of this. I have talked of students’ experience of being subject to employability, and their conceptions of it. What I am attempting to access here is their sense of ‘being in contact with’ employability as a notion or discourse – their awareness of it as ‘thing’. That is why any of my final-year undergraduate students still represents a valuable source, despite not necessarily having employability ‘experience’ in its everyday connotation. Rovio-Johansson & Ingerman expound phenomenography’s ‘experiencing’:

... experience as awareness or instantaneous presence to the world or to things in the world, in contrast to the everyday notion of accumulated being in the world. The person and the world are thus not separated.” (Rovio-Johansson and Ingerman, 2016 p. 261)

So, having established phenomenography’s ‘experiencing’, this assists expansion of another tenet – that there are a limited number of ways of experiencing any specific phenomenon, a ‘way of experiencing’ being:

... characterized by the structure of our awareness. In phenomenographic terms, our awareness has both a structural dimension and a meaning (called referential) dimension. These two dimensions of experience are co-interactive. (Linder and Marshall, 2003 p. 273)

Linder and Marshall (2003) illustrate using Marton & Booth’s (2013) allusion to experiencing a deer in the woods. The structural dimension is its body parts and their relationship to each other (‘internal horizon’), but also how the whole differs from the context – from the trees (‘external horizon’). From these structural dimensions, we will be able to discern the stance of the deer, etc. which provides for

us our meaning (dimension) – for instance, whether it is fearful of being pursued. There is a tension here with my ambition to not contaminate with hegemonic language of employability, because asking directly about employability would automatically co-opt and encourage that language – though it may not reflect the students’ ways of experiencing employability. So, within my research, by reaching to abstracted dimensions that probe *around* employability, I resolve that issue at the cost of partially-structuring for respondents their ‘experiencing’. However, I pose such open and figurative questions that students’ communication of their ‘way’ of experiencing is unrestricted. But, whilst I have rationale for graphic elicitation, the respondent does not – for instance – experience their education as a shape, form, or symbol. So, the ‘telling’ of the ‘way of experiencing’ is mediated by the form of telling requested by me – the researcher. This might appear problematic for graphic representation, and yet I argue that the surfacing of this mediation is positive. That is because it makes manifest one of the criticisms of phenomenography – as Säljö (1997 p. 177) points out:

... communication – i.e., talk (and other means of symbolic communication) – has primacy over experience in some central respects: for the individual it is the tool through which we learn to ‘experience’ and to characterise and communicate our experiences; for the researcher it is a significant part of what can be documented in empirical research. (Säljö, 1997 p. 177)

In other words, Säljö is arguing that symbolic communication underpins our conception of what we are experiencing, and therefore that it intercedes in our ‘way of experiencing’ – and the telling of it. It is not unreasonable for him to ask: “...in what sense do the utterances that people respond with in phenomenographic interviewing [actually] relate to ‘ways of experiencing’?” (Säljö, 1997 p. 177). He points also to the basic power-relations imbalance in a researcher making relatively complex requests of a respondent, emphasised by his example of an adult-child research scenario:

What we really see is a piece of interaction in which the dominant party... imposes meta-questions of a highly abstract nature that might be difficult... to accommodate for any number of reasons. (Säljö, 1997 p. 182)

His point is that we must be wary of interpreting *every* response as indicative of a way of experiencing, as it may be just as indicative of a way of *researching*, and

may even be arbitrary for interviewer approval. Whilst Marton and Säljö exchanged views, I concede that:

We have access to... what people communicate (or what they do), and one should be extremely cautious of considering this as indicating a way of experiencing rather than as, for instance, a way of talking. (Säljö, 1997 p. 178)

My concatenation of Säljö's statement (the epsilon obscures his: "nothing but") represents that his full phrase doesn't accord with my disciplinary field of graphics, where message has form and intent, but also has content. This seems to place me 'on the fence' between Marton's and Säljö's positions, but that is confluent with my proposition that whilst employing a research method, each enactment is a situated practice with my respondents. This fits with Säljö's conclusion that:

we could learn much more about actors' definitions of the world if we viewed their accounts primarily as attempts at communicating in situated practices rather than as ways of experiencing. (Säljö, 1997 p. 188)

My stance, then, is not so much a fence-sitting as an acceptance of the mediative potentials of my practice (detailed within *Contexts of Production* on pp. 62-75). But I contend that such mediation is not a block to revealing collective conceptions of experience. Part of Säljö's point was that language interferes with one's way of experiencing (since language is laden with symbolic preconceptions and supposition). And yet, that forms only part of the experience itself – it is non-dualistic in that regard: what one has *pre-conceived* of an experience and how one conceives of it in the *moment* are part of the whole conception of it. Marton & Booth are more emphatic:

when you speak... you might occasionally reflect or focus in advance on what is to be said, but in general, you experience the words as coming by themselves, without volition. (1997 p. 113)

Yates et al (2012) points out too – via Walsh (2000) – that the researcher's duty is to look beyond surface 'utterances' towards what individuals conceive:

that analysis requires the researcher to more than merely record the different ways participants talk about the phenomenon, but be able to delve behind what is said and how the particular phenomenon is understood. (Yates et al., 2012 p. 104)

My 'theatricalisation' (described within 'Graphic Elicitation' on p. 55-62) surfaces explicitly the non-dualistic nature of the telling of conceiving the experience. By requesting from respondents a bold visual enunciation of their ways of experiencing, they are enticed into visual metaphor that *represents* their way of experiencing it as a whole, supported by verbal explanation of how it does so. In any case, Säljö's critique that we have "nothing but what... [respondents]... communicate" (1997 p. 178) is somewhat a moot point, since respondents are nevertheless communicating *about* their way of experiencing – and why stop with respondents? We also have nothing but what the researcher *selects* to communicate; nothing but what the researcher *thinks* he is communicating; and nothing but what the reader *interprets* as the communication. Does that leave the whole endeavour of research fundamentally flawed? If so, then perhaps what remains is to get on with communicating our claims as transparently as we are able. I sympathise with Säljö's view of mediation in 'ways of experiencing', but reject that is 'all' that we have.

So ontologically, my research acknowledges that there exists:

- mediated tellings of ways of experiencing the thing;
- ways of experiencing the thing; and
- the thing itself.

And I position my practice as revealing, by its span and interpretative mechanisms:

- mediated tellings of ways of experiencing the thing;
- collective indications about ways of experiencing the thing; and
- inferences about the thing itself.

In accepting this, I am hinting that my implementation of phenomenography within graphic inquisition implies 'third-order perspective' – *representation* of second-order perspective. Whilst graphic elicitation is somewhat removed from the normative phenomenographic verbal interview, it is a mechanism for probing, and challenging the *veracity* of the second-order perspective. It respects the tenet of phenomenography that the researcher's focus should not be conformance and correction of how respondents report experiencing a phenomenon. But it does permit probing where the graphic communication reveals more than the verbal communication (or vice versa) – or to challenge areas of dissonance. Whereas

graphic elicitation may appear to further accentuate Säljö's critique of language's confounding influence, it rather has potential to cross-verify and expand descriptions of experience (graphic and verbal). This is contingent on respondents 'speaking' that language, and I have demonstrated that my final-year graphic design undergraduates are likely to enjoy this capacity.

The Phenomenographic Analysis

I have already extensively described my data collection (within *Graphic Elicitation* on pp. 55-62) – by graphic production and explication, and I have detailed contexts of that production. Next, I will describe the procedure and considerations of my phenomenographic approach, for, according to Sandbergh (1997), phenomenography's validity derives from: "only checks and balances... through the use of demonstrative procedure." (Giorgi, 1988 in Sandbergh, 1997 p. 211)

Domains and Bracketing

We are scrutinising with phenomenography:

... the qualitatively different ways in which people experience, conceptualise, perceive, and understand various aspects of, and various phenomena.
(Marton, 1986 p. 31)

In this phenomenographic inquiry, the phenomenon is employability via four domains encapsulating current discourse (see Appendix A: Life Drawing Mappings to Models and Stances of Employability):

- Industry;
- Profession;
- Education; and
- Wider life.

This accords with Assarroudi & Heydari's (2016) 'first step' of: "... examining different dimensions of the subject through reviewing the literature." (2016 p. 220). They assert that this: "will lead to more precise cognition and help to restrict the subject... [and]... assures a better design of the main and probing questions, as well as a proper understanding about other researchers' conceptions." (2016 p. 220). However, such 'pre-consideration' of the phenomenon under investigation might appear contrary to the imperative of 'bracketing' within phenomenography (also in

phenomenology as: “the rule of the epoche”). Bruce (1994 p. 49) elaborates that the researcher, in relation to their own experience, has an obligation to:

... put aside his or her own experience of the phenomenon, and focus on the views or experience of the interviewee.... a ‘suspension of judgement’ has been suggested as a ‘nice’ simile. (Bruce, 1994 p. 54)

And Ashworth & Lucas (Ashworth and Lucas, 1998 p. 420) extend that, in saying that the researcher in relation to his or her own reading, must also...

make the effort to subject apparently relevant theories or earlier research findings to an epoche. Critics may well argue that such a bracketing [sic] is impossible to follow through completely. Many theories and findings become part of the researcher's taken for granted world and therefore are inaccessible for conscious suspension. (Ashworth and Lucas, 1998 p. 420)

Bruce (Bruce, 1994 p. 49) challenges even further that the researcher may be used to ‘bracketing’ in formal analysis, but that this should extend to the conduct of the encounter with respondents too:

Researchers adopting a phenomenographic approach have been used to abiding by similar rules in the analysis of data, our challenge is to abide by them in gathering data as well. (Bruce, 1994 p. 49)

It might be tempting to advocate minimising both researcher experience of the phenomenon and prior reading about the phenomenon, but I contend this is untenable, since it is from exposure or reading that the researcher gains an interest in the phenomenon. Ashworth & Lucas (2000) support this with fundamental pragmatism:

The topic for investigation in the research has to be formulated somehow in the researcher's mind, and the research interviews have to be introduced to the interviewee as being ‘about’ something. So there *is* a necessary presupposition concerning the starting point of research. The researcher and researched *must* begin with some kind of (superficially) shared topic, verbalised in terms which they both recognise as meaningful. If we tried to bracket this, the conversation would be directionless. (Ashworth and Lucas, 2000 p. 298, my emphasis)

This was complicated in my research by the weight of existing language around employability that it was prudent to avoid with respondents where possible. To do so whilst also retaining an embryonic structure of engagement, deep reading was

essential. Nevertheless, I managed to bracket my “presupposition” by indicating to respondents that they were entirely free to decide the ‘scale’ of each dimension *for themselves*, and that they had total freedom to choose how to *represent* each dimension. This was emphasised by my choice of freehand drawing – presenting a large blank, unstructured blanket as canvas. The emergent productivity and range of responses indicates some success. Nevertheless, I recognise that the respondents’ conceptions were partially structured by me, so that my dimensions de facto became the syntax of their ‘external horizons’. During analysis, it is imperative to disentangle my structuring from respondent *restructuring*. To do this, I take a: “detour via detachment” (Lever and Powell, 2017 p. 7) by bracketing my original domains, and listening carefully to the responses of the respondents when they were unambiguously asked to represent how these dimensions/ horizons relate to each other *in their own experience*. Nevertheless, horizons will extend farther within individual conceptions than I have ascribed. The goal of phenomenography during data collection is to cause *individuals*: “experiences and understandings... [that]... are aspects of the subject’s awareness... [to go] from being unreflected to being reflected.” (Marton, 1994 p. 4427).

Outcome Space

On the other hand, phenomenography’s analytical product is the relationships between *collective* ways of understanding, dominantly referred to as “the outcome space” (Tight, 2016; Richardson, 2015; Åkerlind, 2012; Yates et al., 2012; Alsop and Tompsett, 2006; Hasselgren and Beach, 2006; Marton and Pong, 2005; Entwistle, 1997; Hazel et al., 1997; Säljö, 1997). The form of outcome space varies between phenomenographers, some presenting a table, others a diagram, and yet others structured prose (or various combinations of each). These vary too by which *aspect* of the outcome space is being represented – whether it is the: “set of different meanings” (Åkerlind, 2012 p. 122) versus the: “logical structure relating the different meanings” (2012 p. 122). For instance, McLean et al (2015 p. 925) present their ‘set of meanings’ first as structured prose, then organise relationships between them into a table – making comparisons through ‘dimensional themes’ (2015 p. 928.) Blumer et al (2012 pp. 129-139) present their findings entirely as structured prose, though for me consequentially the relationships seemed harder to ascertain. Metsärinne & Kallio (2011) jump directly to a diagrammatic “summary of perspectives” (2011 p.

116), immediately suggesting structural relationships. They follow this with two textual tables: one providing an “example of each perspective and its borderline” (2011 p. 117), and the other an “illustration of each perspective” (2011 p. 118). In this way, they span the underpinning practice of phenomenography that both the *set of meanings* and the *internal relationships* are explicitly surfaced. Though the focus here is on the collective, examples help to clarify meaning, and indicate connection between the researcher’s construction and the respondents’ original utterances. Åkerlind’s (2012) “set of different meanings” are the component units of the outcome space – frequently referred to as ‘categories of description’. There is dialectic – perhaps even tension – between the overarching outcome space and component categories of description that can only be settled through iteration, as exemplified by the frustration of Kinnunen & Simon (2012):

... the data analysis process is often iterative and the resulting outcome space... evolves gradually. This iterative process can be sometimes frustrating (“Am I ever going to be able to make sense of this data?”). In addition, since there is no telling beforehand how many iterations data analysis takes it may be difficult to predict how long time the analysis takes. (Kinnunen and Simon, 2012 p. 216)

They caution that: “a failure to continue with iterative data analysis process... may lead to superficial results” (Kinnunen and Simon, 2012 p. 216). I describe later how I use NVivo qualitative data analysis software and analysis within a bespoke interactive interface to continue my iteration. The complexities of forming outcome spaces are not uniquely problematic – others have indicated more fundamental issues. Hazel et al (1997) summarise that iteration risks reducing descriptions to overly-sterile representations:

A number of writers have drawn attention to the fact that the phenomenographic outcome space is typically a logically constructed conceptual one, which is of the mind rather than of emotion... If a significant aspect of experience, such as emotion, is missing from the experience... then this is significant for those who see emotion as integrally related. (Hazel et al., 1997 p. 222)

The authors propose this as problematic because:

The views of those who come to understand readily through emotion, emotion in harmony with reason, will be lost. This will include both women and men but probably far more women. (Hazel et al., 1997 p. 222)

Whilst I have no expertise with which to assess the validity of the inordinate effect on women, it stands as an issue, and I resolve within my analysis to heed meanings in emotion. Hazel et al (1997) proceed to a wider critique that phenomenography's collective stance is dominated by male voices – both by authorship and by respondent sampling:

Does the exclusion of women – and of the values and ways of knowing associated with women – make the outcome space not so much elegantly parsimonious as restricted or impoverished? (Hazel et al., 1997 p. 215)

Responding to this criticism risks reducing a compelling and relevant critique of phenomenography in under-represented groups (Hazel et al., 1997 p. 215) to an anachronism. The core argument relating to phenomenography's principle of categorisation stands, but two decades after Hazel et al's article, greater than half my blankets *were* the product of women. This was not by intention, but perhaps obliquely through the principle of maximising variation. In any case, my research appears to have partially-secured: "women's place... in the outcome space" (Hazel et al., 1997 p. 224), albeit it with a male interpretation of their meanings, for which I can only mitigate by transparency of my analysis.

Säljö (1997) is frustrated by refutation of his assertion that phenomenography surfaces 'ways of talking' more than 'ways of experiencing':

If one criticises the abstract and highly reductionistic "outcome spaces" as indicators of an experiential perspective on reality, one is typically told that they are empirically generated in situations where interviewees are allowed to speak freely, the claim being that there is a solid empirical basis in which much effort has been taken to ensure that the subject's experience has emerged. (Säljö, 1997 p. 179)

My view is that I am not so concerned as to whether my data is "a solid empirical" (1997 p. 179) representation of something wider, but rather whether my outcome space helps to 'tell of' the breadth of experiences related by respondents, with all their contingencies and contexts of production. Having said that, I do want to resolve a criticism around transparency and loss of the individual – typified by Säljö's observation that phenomenography claims:

... that one particular utterance should not be linked to one particular individual's experiencing (since the prime interest is in the "collective anatomy

of awareness”) ... the research object becomes somewhat ephemeral. (Säljö, 1997 p. 179)

I have responded to this by developing a proof-of-concept interactive graphic interface to retain the integrity of the *collective* outcome space, but provide an interrogative mechanism to its underlying *individual* source data. The research object is anything but ephemeral, but rather increasingly tangible, so a transparency-aid for my analysis. But the user of the interface requires appreciation of other facets and steps of phenomenographic analysis, so I will detail those before returning to an elaboration of my interface. It is hoped that the interface satisfies some of Säljö's (1997 p. 179) critique, and it goes further than Sjöström & Dahlgren (2002) suggest:

The researcher has to show that a chosen way of describing differences and similarities is well supported by the empirical material. This may be achieved by providing excerpts from the interviews to support the relevance of the categories. (Sjöström and Dahlgren, 2002 p. 342)

I exemplify each of my categories not just by *single* extracts (as is conventional within phenomenography), but *all* associated extracts and, beneath that, the *whole* source material analysed. This is important, because:

The core question of credibility in a phenomenographic study is that about the relationship between the empirical data and the categories for describing ways of experiencing a certain phenomenon. (Sjöström and Dahlgren, 2002 p. 342)

These “categories for describing ways of experiencing” (p. 342) are most frequently referred to as ‘categories of description’ (Tight, 2016; Åkerlind, 2012; Hallett, 2010; Marton and Pong, 2005; Sjöström and Dahlgren, 2002; Ashworth and Lucas, 2000; Entwistle, 1997; Hazel et al., 1997; Sandbergh, 1997; Trigwell and M. Prosser, 1997; Marton, 1981).

Towards Categories of Description

We are looking to form ‘categories of description’, but what is being categorised?

Marton & Pong (2005) clarify that:

A ‘conception’, the basic unit of description in phenomenographic research, has been called various names, such as ‘ways of conceptualizing’, ‘ways of experiencing’, ‘ways of seeing’, ‘ways of apprehending’, ‘ways of

understanding', and so on... The reason for using so many different synonyms is that although none of them corresponds completely to what we have in mind, they all do to a certain extent. (Marton and Pong, 2005 p. 336)

So, we are categorising *conceptions of ways of experiencing* to build *categories of description*:

These 'different ways of understanding', or conceptions, are typically represented in the form of categories of description, which are further analysed with regard to their logical relations in forming an outcome space. (Marton and Pong, 2005 p. 335)

I will return to the 'logical relations' later. Marton & Pong (2005) outline the first action of their phenomenographic analysis:

... marking and segmenting the transcripts according to the themes addressed. A unit was formed whenever there was sufficient evidence that a particular overall meaning had been expressed. (Marton and Pong, 2005 p. 337)

This seems not dissimilar to other qualitative analysis in which parts of the transcript are coded around emerging themes. But Sjöström & Dahlgren (2002) refine further the analysis phase of phenomenographic research – turning to earlier work of Dahlgren's with Fallsberg (Dahlgren and Fallsberg, 1991). They present seven steps, though Sjöström & Dahlgren (2002) acknowledge that the: "process is somewhat difficult to describe because of the mutual relationships between the different steps" (p. 341). Marton & Pong's (2005) description above, for instance, conflates the first four steps (here having more detail on *how* to 'mark and segment' transcripts towards 'units' within phenomenography). The seven steps are:

- Step 1: Familiarisation with data;
- Step 2: Compilation of data;
- Step 3: Reduction of data;
- Step 4: Preliminary grouping towards categories;
- Step 5: Preliminary comparison of categories;
- Step 6: Naming categories;
- Step 7: Contrastive comparison of categories.

I will adopt the granularity of these steps, as this maximises the transparency deemed indicative of 'credibility', which:

... is based on a precise description of each part of the research process, the perspective applied to the phenomenon, explicit presentation of interview questions and procedures as well as a careful description of the analyses and conclusions. (Sjöström and Dahlgren, 2002 p. 342)

I have already provided “precise description” of the former elements of my research, and from hereon provide “careful description of the analysis and conclusions”.

Familiarisation with Data

The researcher is introduced to the empirical material by reading through the transcripts. The familiarization phase is also necessary for correcting errors in the transcripts. (Sjöström and Dahlgren, 2002 p. 341)

My research has not only the transcripts as its data, but also a 2.1-by-1.6-metre physical artefact (‘golden blanket’) for each of the thirty-seven respondents. Each of these forms were considered differently, since whilst the entire collection of transcripts could be contained in a ring-binder, blankets were much more recalcitrant. The best physical ‘collective’ access to these was formed by carefully folding each into a plastic transparent indexed packet, collated within a long box that also held the ring binder of every transcript (see Figure 1 – Physical Artefacts of Research). Whilst it later became unnecessary to frequently handle these physical assets, they stayed in my eye-line on the desk where I conducted my analysis and writing. This provided for me a constant reminder of the tangibility of human endeavour to which my phenomenographic collective alluded, for all its abstraction of categories.



Figure 1 – Physical Artefacts of Research

Nevertheless, whilst these forms assisted access to the physicality of artefacts, they were not the most productive form for analysis, and I chose *NVivo* qualitative analysis software to assist with this. *NVivo* permitted me to thematically ‘cross-code’ units of my verbal text for themes, and my graphic text, since individual areas of images of my blankets could each be coded. There was also another benefit of this translation from physical to computer-based: it assisted greatly with the first step of ‘familiarisation’. First, the translation to computer helped with familiarisation with my verbal text on each transcript’s return from transcription. To probe productivity of graphic elicitation as seen from respondents’ viewpoint, there was a section of audio towards the end of each elicitation where I asked: “how did you find that?” (or similar), and the subsequent responses were succinct enough to be transcribed by me. But for the remaining 1,360 minutes of audio, I employed a team of transcriptionists. I requested verbatim transcripts (even agreeing a term for the rustling of the blanket*), using syntax codes that allowed me to import the transcripts to *NVivo*. Each transcript entry was then aligned with corresponding audio, both text and audio sitting ‘live’ within the *NVivo* software. This permitted any part of the transcript, where it was significant, to be read whilst listening to its accompanying audio. This lead to minor corrections in the transcript though, overall, transcripts did

* ‘rustling of sheet’

return with a large measure of fidelity to what was spoken. The transcriptionists had to handle an unusually-wide range of underlying factors that were exacerbated by the atypical nature of this research, and included:

- 1) Poor quality of audio, or audio obscured by other sounds. The locations of encounter were mostly studio spaces or crit. rooms associated with studio activity (with acoustics suiting that purpose). As detailed earlier, the blankets had their own sonorous qualities too (there are 1,088 mentions of the sound of blankets). Of the 1,360 minutes, we diagnosed 43 minutes as 'unclear', but there were many more instance within the 'clear' audio of temporary lack of audio clarity ("unclear" appears in the combined text 1,375 times, representing 1.9% of the total words);
- 2) Accent or dialect misinterpretations, being partially a symptom of the (purposeful) variation of respondents throughout the UK. We diagnosed 235 minutes as heavily 'accented', not accounting for individual lapses into heavier use of colloquial language related to locality or other cultural factors such as age. Regarding the latter, the most frequent words in the transcripts are "yeah" and "like", accounting between them for 7% of the total word count. Whilst I may account for a large proportion of "yeah" in encouraging respondents, most "like" statements were uttered by respondents not comparatively but as a contemporary form of paralanguage;
- 3) The metaphorical nature of the dialogue, for which the transcriptionists did not have the explicatory graphics (for instance: "[Q] It looks very nebulous... [A] Um, yeah a cloud... it is nebulous because it's uncertain... [Q] So they're not dark clouds, but they're simply... obscuring clouds?"). The visual metaphor introduces levels of referentiality. By being a metaphor, the cloud is referencing something else (in this case, the respondent's experience of what might constitute 'wider life'). Ultimately, then, the referential aspect 'uncertainty' must be attached to the thing ('future wider-life') intended by the respondent, rather than 'cloud-like'; and
- 4) By the nature of graphic elicitation, frequent accompanying deictic utterances are caught but are not necessarily 'accounted for' (e.g. gesturing whilst using words like "this", "that there", "across this line", "round and round

here”, “to there”). This is more emphatic and frequent than in normative verbal encounters, so the transcriptionists sometimes had ambiguous reference for what was being spoken about.

Aside from the verbal text, the translation to computer also helped me familiarise with the detail of each blanket. There were three significant parts to that familiarisation. The first was immediately after the elicitation sessions and involved the removal of each blanket from the set of envelopes in which I had sent them back by registered post. Each blanket was removed, smoothed, examined for its integrity, and then re-folded in the same way for each blanket. The unexpected exactitude required for this task re-familiarised me with what was drawn on each blanket, but also re-familiarised me in the changed materiality of each blanket. Each had originated from tight 8-by-10-centimetre original thin plastic packets, but could now – with much patience and expelling of air – only be contained within 16-by-23-centimetre thick plastic packets. Each was indexed and stored until it was possible to find the correct conditions to photograph each blanket, which was the second step of familiarisation with my graphic data, and was itself an iterative experiment.

At this point, circumstances intervened so that my research was interrupted for many months. That passage of time presented a fortuitous opportunity to separate my analysis of the data from the excitement and zeal of the circumstances of its collection. This permitted a cooler examination of the invocative and interpretive meta-aspects of graphic elicitation. I was now more likely to focus on what the data was actually revealing about my respondent’s ‘conceptions’ rather than the sense during encounter. I had less to ‘bracket’ because my own data collection was removed from my analysis by time, and I returned to it ‘cooler’ and more dispassionate.

Prior to my interruption, I had found the large scale of the blankets combined with their uneven reflective properties to be problematic in experimenting with image capture. They not only reflect the ambient environment, but by their folds do so unpredictably and unevenly. Through experimentation, I realised that this required a large enough space to both unfurl, photograph and re-fold the blankets; that the space needed to be wholly white with capability to control or mitigate lighting; and that it had to be available for the considerable length of time to facilitate that

deliberate, methodical process. Eventually, I was granted permission to occupy a dark unused basement of a hospital previously used to store medical records. After movement of shelving, and erection of structures that permitted hanging of both the blanket and encapsulating white backdrops, a suitable environment was created to complete the photographic capture of the 37 blankets (see Figure 2 – Photographing the Blankets).

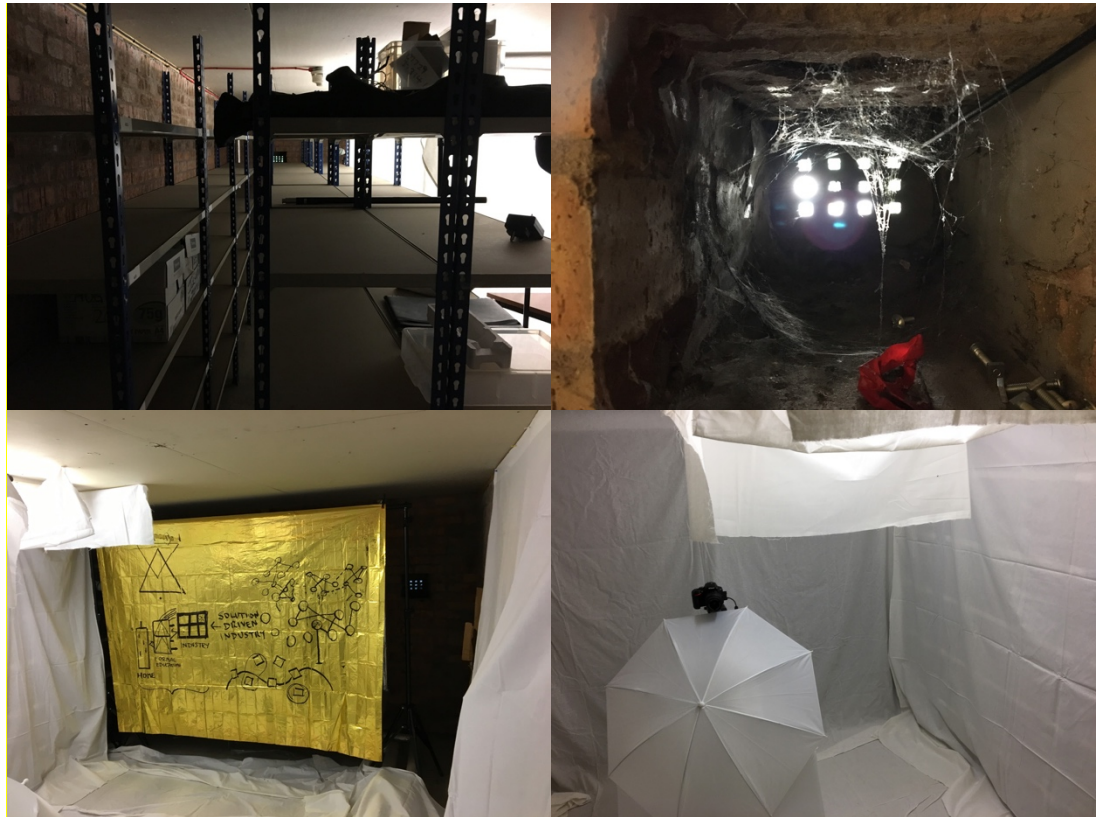


Figure 2 – Photographing the Blankets

The camera used RAW format with a pixel count of 6000-by-4000-pixels. There was at least one ‘full-frontal’ of each blanket, and several supporting shots of particular graphic groupings within each blanket. This permitted later flexible use of the imagery, and meant that each blanket provided 2-3Gb of image data.

My most dominant use has been the front shot of each blanket. I initially re-touched several within *Adobe Photoshop* image manipulation software to fit a perfect rectangle, since blanket folds, reflections and undulations in the air caused distortion. But I halted this process when I realised that I was changing their aesthetic and material representation – and potentially, then, the referential

(meaning) content – of each blanket. Instead, I reverted to the ragged shapes of blankets that had originally been photographed, though I did correct for any distortion caused by the deviation of the camera lens from the perpendicular. This meant that the image of each blanket was as true as possible to viewing from around two metres from centre, and colour-corrected to accurately as possible represent the experience of that viewing. This may differ from the lighting of the environment in which the blanket was drawn upon – and similarly the angle of viewing. I created a *Photoshop* PSD format image of around 150Mb for each blanket, presented in *Life Drawing Praxis Blankets*. From these, smaller JPG versions of 1344-by-1024 pixels were created, for import to the *NVivo* software. So, within the computer-held data, there were now 37 transcripts, any component of which could be read ‘live’ alongside its respective source audio clip; and 37 computer-based images of the blankets. All source materials were at this point initially coded with their respective respondent identifiers (known as ‘cases’ within *NVivo*).

Thus, the outputs of my research’s graphic elicitation sessions were held in two distinct forms. One was physically – a repository of the artefacts themselves and printed transcripts, permitting a haptic experience of the data. The second was computer-based – facilitating a referential and logical experience of the data. The data was nearly ready for Sjöström & Dahlgren’s (2002) second step of compilation, but the amount of data generated during interviews was an issue. This was partially because of the datasets’ dual verbal and graphic modalities (multiplying the data). But it was also because I had wanted to ensure that enough data was collected at each of the eight geographically-dispersed data collection sites, since the logistics of returning to any single site was significant. This had resulted in 37 transcripts and 37 blankets – each over 4 domains. The recommendation for sample size of respondents within phenomenography differs – there clearly needs to be enough to achieve variation, but it is suggested that a ‘saturation’ occurs, after which variation is succeeded by repetition. Lamb et al (2011), indicate that around twenty respondents may be optimal:

... previous phenomenographic studies... suggest a sample of at least 20 is needed for maximum variation; after this few new data, concepts and/or

themes are likely to emerge (Alexandersson in Sandberg, 2000). (Lamb et al., 2011 p. 677)

But this is an imprecisely determined indication, and clearly somewhat dependent on the research method's relative potential for surfacing variation. I have outlined a number of ways in which my selection of respondents and graphic elicitation method potentially enriches expression of variation. The visual data from my research provided a further opportunity to identify those blankets that were likely to be most productive in these terms. So, I conducted an initial coding of the visual components of all 37 blankets. This did not form the phenomenographic analysis itself, but rather an ordering of the collected data to yield potentially the wider-ranging, potentially richest data (conceptions) first. It was designed to make my analysis more efficient, but also provided yet another familiarisation with my data. All 37 blankets were coded against 28 reductive logical statements (see *Life Drawing Praxis – Blanket Priority Matrix*) regarding the graphic groupings that respondents had drawn. The statements were part of a hierarchy of themes, each with its own relative 'ranking' – so, for instance, a blanket was coded 'TRUE' against code 'TC1A' if it appeared that it was judged: "Clearly referencing adversity or challenge" – otherwise, it was coded 'FALSE'. Each hierarchy's ranking was then used in a complex spreadsheet calculation (so 'TC1A' was part of the hierarchy top-level 'TC1' which had a 10% weighting of significance). The spreadsheet then provided a 'potential productivity' rating for each blanket, and ultimately an ordered table ranking the potentially-productivity of each respondent within the phenomenographic analysis to follow. Aside from the measured and calculated ranking, I also made an 'intuitive' ranking of the likely productivity of each blanket ('manual ranking' within the spreadsheet), and there were clear broad correlations. But, for objectivity, I followed the calculated ordering provided by the spreadsheet rather than my 'instinctive' assessment. Again, I emphasise that the analysis to follow was not contingent on this ordering, which was based only on what *appeared* to be 'clear'. Given the extended interval between data collection and subsequent analysis, these additional steps – though time-consuming – provided a good re-familiarisation with my data. But they also clearly delineated and oriented me towards the important locus of the phenomenographic analysis to follow – conceptions emerging from the data.

Given the large amount of data – over two modes – produced within my research, and indications from elsewhere, I expected that my analysis might begin to experience ‘saturation’ of variation after around 15-18 respondents. This was somewhat a tangential speculation since I was almost certain to do so within my available data of 37 respondents. Åkerlind (2012) helpfully instructs that:

Some researchers also start the analysis using a preliminary sample of transcripts before bringing in the full set of transcripts (Prosser, 1994; Dahlgren, 1995; Trigwell, 2000; Åkerlind, 2005b). The preliminary analysis is then reconsidered in the light of additional transcripts. (Åkerlind, 2012 p. 122)

Given the expectation with the qualities of my sample data that I might expect full saturation after around half of the available sample size of 37 (say, 15-18), it appeared wise to assess preliminary grouping as I approached that point. I resolved to assess viability of preliminary grouping after 12 blankets, and these form the intense detail of my prototype interactive interface.

Compilation of Data

The second step involves compilation of answers from all respondents to a certain question. The main task here is to identify the most significant elements in answer given by each informant. (Sjöström and Dahlgren, 2002 p. 341)

This step aligns with the beginning of Marton & Pong’s: “marking and segmenting the transcripts according to the themes addressed” (Marton and Pong, 2005 p. 337). Having determined an order in which I would analyse the blankets and transcripts, this stage of analysis was to be performed in the *NVivo* software. The graphic groupings drawn by each respondent offered a convenient ‘in-road’ to the transcript which I utilised fully. In addition to the qualities of the verbal text, I also wanted to ensure that I coded and retained the qualities of the graphic groupings, since in terms of the responses of a graphic elicitation either graphic or verbal is impoverished by being isolated. Mine is rather different to the analyses of many graphic elicitations, which abandon the graphic in favour of a focus on purely verbal – the graphic being merely a mechanism to encourage the verbal, and provide occasional illustration. My approach is designed to maintain the integrity of linkage between the graphic and verbal, for both analytical comprehensiveness and expository interest. I used *NVivo*’s ability to demark a region of an image to ‘code’

areas of blankets appropriately. *NVivo* tends towards treating imagery as evidence of photographic ethnography (which mine was not), but I used its capacity to describe the content of an image to illuminate the images and link them to transcript entries. It was clumsier than I preferred, but by *forcing* selection of which transcript text aligned most appropriately with which regions of the blanket, it offered another chance to focus and become familiar with what *precisely* respondents had stated. By using time-codes, it was possible to also ‘step-back’ into the audio, verified against transcript for every extract of the image analysis.

For every ‘graphic grouping’ (*NVivo* region) identified within a blanket, there were several phases of analysis and coding:

1. A short, factual name was given to the graphic group (such as ‘Gold Star’ – because ‘Gold Star’ had been written next to a pentagram symbol). This name sometimes changed on listening to the matching transcript, if the respondent indicates that name to be inappropriate;
2. ‘DESC’ was used to head the structural detail of the graphic grouping, containing a full description of what could be observed;

My next phases were refined over the analysis of the first few blankets, as I reflected within my memo writing on my productivity. I wanted to make explicit to myself what I might need to ‘bracket’ from analysis, so the first blankets were initially coded and commented with conceptions that each graphic grouping *might* (within my own ‘understandings’) be illuminating – without reference to transcript. These interpretations were headed with the term ‘COLD’ to indicate a pseudo-necromantic ‘cold reading’ of the graphic content. The themes of these interpretations were coded under the heading ‘interpreted’. Could a researcher with experience of critiquing graphic outputs, like me, better interpret ‘raw’ graphics? After 161 instances of thematic coding over 7 blankets, I concluded that the answer was more a qualified ‘no’ than a qualified ‘yes’. Those first seven blankets clarified that attempts to interpret only the drawn element of graphic elicitation would be to misrepresent my own conceptions as those of respondents. Another element of coding eliminated over the first few blankets was the coding of the quality of each mark made by respondents on the blanket (coded as ‘mark-making’). This was categorised into arrows, fills, shapes, strokes, and was abandoned after 163

instances over the first four blankets. There was no emerging correlation between the qualities of the marks that respondents drew (*per se*) and their conceptions (or any other matter of interest). The final coding that was eliminated as unproductive was coding of every deictic or metaphorical ‘utterance’ (i.e. where either researcher or respondent were pointing to or querying something gesturally). This was eliminated after 324 instances over the first four blankets. These codings were archived within the node ‘retired’ within the *NVivo* software, and not conducted for future blankets. The next step taken with all blankets was:

3. A coding of ‘symbology’ employed by the respondent within each graphic grouping (for instance, ‘gun’, ‘cloud’ or ‘wind turbine’). These were hierarchized and grouped as analysis progressed. It is ambiguous what this coding might add to the analysis (since no respondent had physically experienced a gun, cloud or wind turbine regarding what they were describing). Nevertheless, this coding was maintained as potentially correlating later structural and referential interpretations.
4. Under the heading ‘VERB’, an explanation was written of what the respondent was saying as graphic groupings were drawn. This is where timecodes and extracts of text were copied from the transcripts to the graphic analysis – this was the primary linkage between graphic and text (i.e. it made explicit which talking related to which drawing). This formed the source material for the coding conducted under the heading ‘verified’.

Through this marking-up and coding of each graphic grouping, a detailed compilation of data was formed for each blanket (see Figure 3 – Compilation and Coding of Data in *NVivo*). The number of graphic groupings per blanket varied between 9 and 15, though the first revealed 20 distinct ‘graphic groupings’. Over the first 12 blankets analysed, 1,575 thematic codings were identified, and these partially informed the ‘preliminary grouping’, but there was yet another intermediary step prior to the preliminary grouping itself.

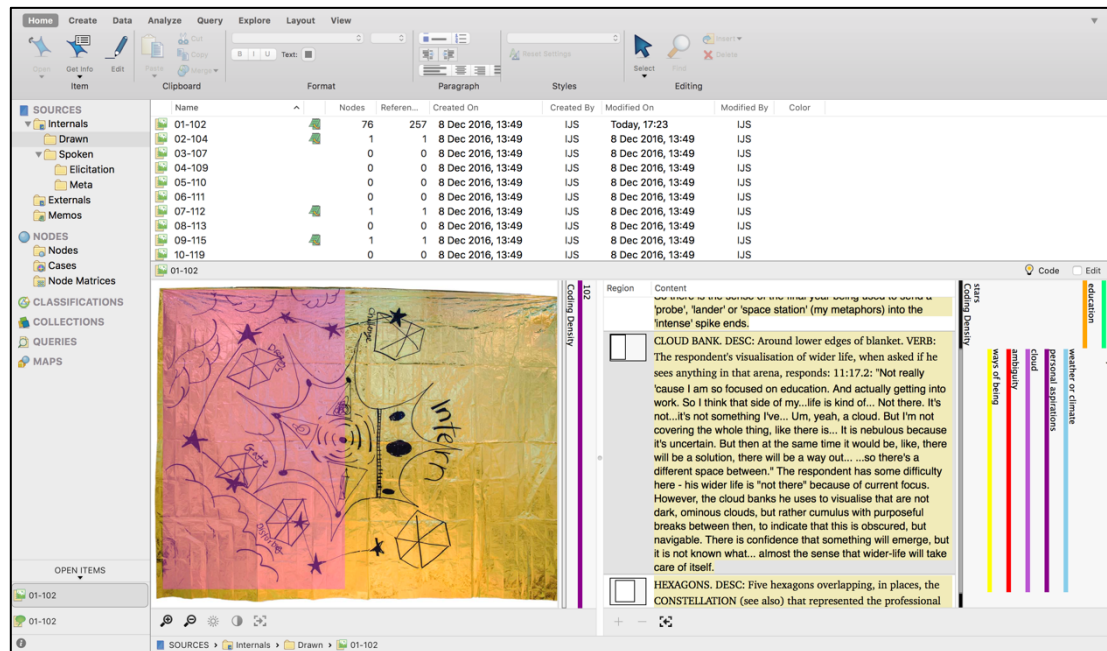


Figure 3 – Compilation and Coding of Data in NVivo

Reduction of Data

The third step is a condensation or reduction of the individual answers to find the central parts of longer answers or a dialogue. (Sjöström and Dahlgren, 2002 p. 341)

Within my research, the ‘individual answers’ had formed over the first 12 blankets around 148 graphic groupings. But these were not yet ready to stand as ‘units of meaning’ free of their sources, since they required another level of reduction. I evidenced an explicit textual trail of my approach to this, producing a text for each blanket, which I called a ‘Blanket Reading’ (see *Life Drawing Praxis – Blanket Readings*). Each reading might appear to be a proliferation of data rather than a reduction, amounting to an average over the 12 blankets of around 5,000 words per blanket. But much of the newly-formed text was analysis, with just illustrative examples of respondent data included. Of the selection and qualities of that respondent data, Alsop & Tompsett (2006) direct that:

The criterion of parsimony requires that ‘similarity of view’ is captured by the researcher within a single representative phrase or statement. Repetition of the same view is then ignored; phenomenography is intended to define the limits of how a phenomenon is experienced rather than what is normative. Each of the comments that remain can be traced back to at least one account, but is now considered against the different comments that could be made about the same issue. If the sample is selected appropriately this will

represent all the possible comments that can be made. (Alsop and Tompsett, 2006 p. 248)

In line with this phenomenographic ethos of parsimonious variation, where a respondent uses several ways to describe the same situation or experience, underlying 'utterances' are sparingly pulled-through as illustration. So, whilst each of my 'readings' attempts to demonstrate the conceptions expressed, repetition is left behind. This means that whilst another interpreter might be guided towards the same conceptions, they may choose other parts of the same text to illustrate them. I have selected what appears to me to be the most apt and eloquent extract in each case, without judgement on the underlying conception. So, the 'reading' produced for each blanket is conceptually reductive in that it portrays the range of conceptions from each respondent, rather than attempts to be a condensed 're-telling' of the transcript and drawing. My earlier analysis readings contained additional headings relating to 'cold' interpretations and codings that were 'retired', but the key hierarchy settled on and used within the phenomenographic analysis is:

- Verified Reading– a short summary of the whole blanket and the respondent's approach.
- Learning – a reduction of the respondent's key utterances about learning or conceptions of education, and transitions relating to that. Key (non-repetitive) illustrative quotes were pulled through here with their timecodes;
- Profession – a reduction of the respondent's key utterances relating distinctly to their own movement, progression, pathways, and concerns within their intended field;
- Industry – a reduction of the respondent's key utterances relating distinctly to conceptions of the nature and demarcation of their intended field or 'industry';
- Broader – a reduction of the respondent's utterances around conceptions of a wider life to come (e.g. hopes, fears, aspirations, personal relationships, etc.);
- Revelations of Reading – this contained an even more clarified reduction of the earlier headings, and provided for me (particularly earlier in the process) a reflective space in which to examine both the respondent's conceptions, but also my own practice of analysis. This was where I explicitly surfaced aspects of the analysis proving productive, and indicated matters around the analysis (such as evidence of the need for further bracketing), and so

suggested to myself appropriate adjustments to future analyses. As described earlier, this led to refinement of the analysis over the first four-to-seven blankets, so that analysis was at its most focussed thereafter;

- Meta-View of Process – This was the response to my question: “how did you find that” (or similar) at the end of the graphic elicitation. This text does not form part of the phenomenographic analysis, but is used in my own assessment of the productivity of graphic elicitation; and
- Detail of Graphic Analysis – This listed every graphic grouping within the blanket and the detailed analysis that I had applied to it, with time-codes and more extensive lifting of verbal text. This provided evidential support and cross-checking for the reduced material within earlier headings. It was useful in my ‘re-conjoining’ of verbal and graphic described as part of the next steps.

It was very clear from the amount of analytical text emerging, that a preliminary grouping on the first 12 blankets was not only viable but prudent.

Preliminary Grouping Towards Categories

The fourth step contains a preliminary grouping or classification of similar answers. (Sjöström and Dahlgren, 2002 p. 341)

Marton (1986) indicates the perceptual swerve now required of analysis, in saying that:

The researcher's attention is now shifted from the individual subjects (i.e. from the interviews from which the quotes were abstracted) to the meaning embedded [in] the quotes themselves. The boundaries separating individuals are abandoned and interest is focused on the 'pool of meanings' discovered in the data (Marton, 1986 p. 43)

Whilst not all phenomenographers appear to attach the term ‘pool of meanings’ to the themes and supporting extracts from their text, I do adopt the terminology as an omnipresent prompt to focus on meaning. I am grouping into pools of equivalent meanings, but the point at which analysis begins a preliminary grouping into a pool could, clearly, affect the perspective of later-analysed samples. One might, having formed a preliminary grouping, be tempted to look for correlation within the groupings already formed rather than remain open-minded later. This is a judgement call, and Marton (1986) outlines the tension inherent in this process:

Thus, each quote has two contexts in relation to which it has been interpreted: first, the interview from which it was taken, and second, the 'pool of meanings' to which it belongs. The interpretation is an interactive procedure which reverberates between these two contexts. (Marton, 1986 p. 43)

During that iterative tension, it is prudent to remember that: "utterances are brought together into categories on the basis of their similarities", but that: "categories are differentiated from one another in terms of their differences." (Marton, 1986 p. 43) I am reminded of a sand-based timer, the narrowing neck representing the 'pool of meanings'; and the sand below, the categories. This iterative play between convergent and divergent will be familiar to design practitioners. Whilst *NVivo* helped through 'coding' to isolate themes, the burgeoning analysis now called for a more complete synoptic outlook. But, I had to leave open potential for candid reassessment (and potential later non-defensive adaptation) of preliminary groupings, since Marton pragmatically points out that:

The process is tedious, time-consuming, labor-intensive, and interactive. It entails the continual sorting and re-sorting of data. Definitions for categories are tested against the data, adjusted, retested, and adjusted again. (Marton, 1986 p. 43)

Åkerlind (2012) assists by suggesting qualities of correctly formed categories of description:

- That each category in the outcome space reveals something distinctive about a way of understanding the phenomenon
- That the categories are logically related, typically as a hierarchy of structurally inclusive relationships
- That the outcomes are parsimonious – i.e., that the critical variation in experience observed in the data be represented by a set of as few categories as possible

(Åkerlind 2012, p. 117)

Phenomenographic analysis is, then, not easy, either in practice nor in its validation, and there was an extra complication in my analysis. My preliminary grouping had to maintain the linkage between the graphic and verbal. Whilst *NVivo* had taken me so far, there was a dualistic position to its analytical possibilities – it forced a separation between verbal transcript and graphic image. In short, it was not designed with graphic elicitation in mind: time-codes could not be directly attached to imagery, and

nor could transcript be directly attached to images. I needed another way to ‘attach’ transcript to blanket as a unit of ‘meaning’ that could be ‘pooled’ with other units.

My solution was my interactive interface at: <http://lifedrawing.graphics> – not simply as exposition of my initial analysis, but as a fundamental part of the formation of that analysis. It uses the open-source WordPress content management system, with additional functionality provided by commercially-available ‘plug-ins’, my own computer coding using the ‘PHP’ programming language, and cascading style sheets (CSS). There were several aspects of WordPress that made it suitable to task:

- WordPress permits presentation of text and image together (within ‘posts’);
- ‘Hyperlinks’ can be defined within content to ‘drill-down’ into data. I used this to permit several levels of attribution of content to underlying sources;
- It permits the declaration of structures to bespoke units of content (‘custom post types’). I designed the post-type ‘Extracts’ to contain the extracted ‘meaning’ units, and ‘Artefacts’ for the original data;
- Alongside bespoke content types, one can additionally bespoke categories of meta-data – I specified a ‘Category of Description’ hierarchy, so that any ‘Extract’ could be associated with any number of category;
- WordPress permits graphic manipulations of its content, and the creation of bespoke menus and interfaces to ‘query’ that content.

This provided content management and categorisation that permitted, through meta-data adjustment, any defined categories to be: “tested against the data, adjusted, retested, and adjusted again.” (Marton, 1986 p. 43). So it facilitated my “interactive procedure which reverberates between contexts” (Marton, 1986 p. 43). This mechanism also solved my research’s specific concern with alignment of graphic and transcript, by extracting ‘graphic groupings’ from their underlying blankets. This was a complex process, since graphics were obfuscated by the colour, folds, and reflections of the blankets. I used a laborious procedure of graphic dissection and manipulation in *Adobe Photoshop* software to isolate graphics, and then *Adobe Illustrator* software to trace the markings into a scalable format separated from background. That format was scalable vector graphics (SVG), because it is one of the most versatile formats. These very focussed graphics, isolated from individual drawings, were combined with specific verbal extracts (similarly isolated from

individual transcripts). Meta-data and hyperlinks permitted traceability back to sources. This provided a valuable verification where decontextualisation had created ambiguity, and for later interrogation by researcher or reader of the consequent analysis. This is illustrated in Figure 4 – Interactive interface. A journey within the interface, from the entire pool of meanings of analysed blankets to the verbal and graphic source materials, is illustrated in Life Drawing Praxis – Appendix C:.

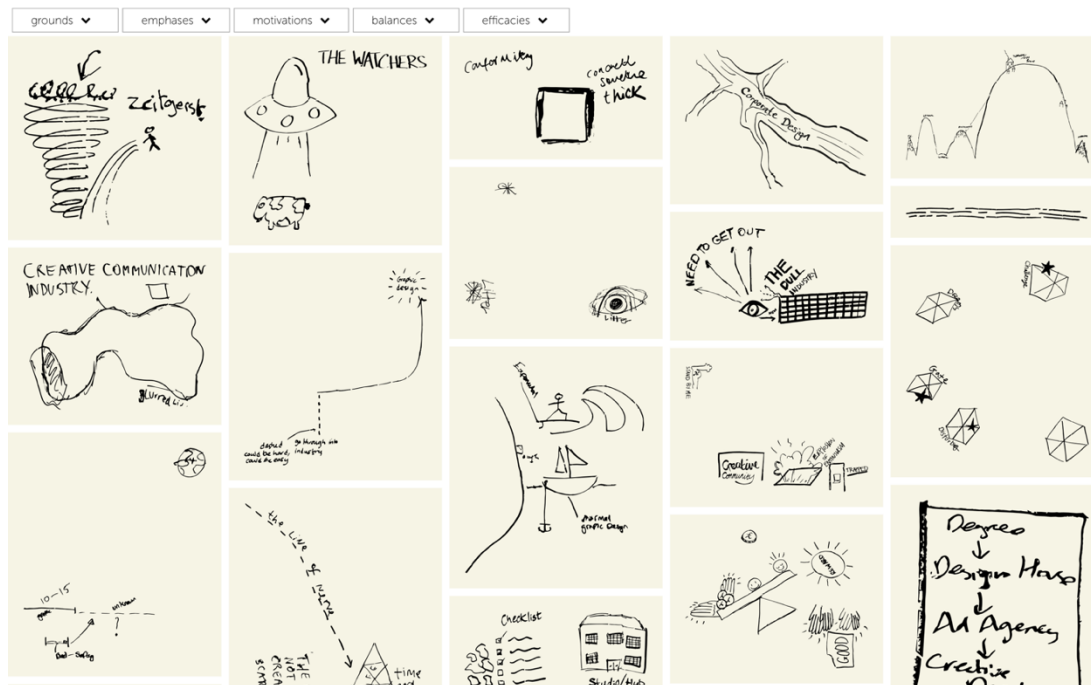


Figure 4 – Interactive interface

The lower portion of the screen shows every graphic grouping extracted from its respondent context, and hovering over each displays its ‘external horizons’. Clicking on the graphic shows its larger form together with its relating verbal transcript extract. Clicking on the time-codes within that text drills-down to the original source data. The upper portion of the screen is a series of drop-down menus indicating how the graphic groupings can be interrogated, each menu containing category titles from a single outcome space.

The category titles appear simple, but Åkerlind (2012) reminds us of the complexity of these categories of description. They need to reflect not only referential (meaning) aspects, but also structural aspects of the data, but simultaneously expose both similarities and differences across categories and associated

transcripts. And any change in one will have implications for the others. (Åkerlind, 2012 p. 122) The remainder of this fourth step (preliminary grouping), and the final remaining steps are concerned with the more detailed development of this outcome space. These are best illustrated alongside the outcomes of the analysis, and the following chapter moves to detail the outcomes from this research within the framework of these remaining steps.

Chapter 4: Outcomes

Sjöström & Dahlgren's (2002) reminds us: "of the mutual relationships between the different steps." (Sjöström and Dahlgren, 2002 p. 341). So, it may be helpful here to summarise what I have detailed having done and what remains to be done. I have so far elaborated how I:

- Familiarised myself with the data through checking transcripts and photographing the artefacts;
- Compiled that data within *NVivo* qualitative analysis software;
- Initiated a reduction of the data by coding for emergent meanings;
- Began preliminary grouping towards categories, exposed with an interactive interface.

What remains to be done is the focus of this chapter:

- Concluding my: "preliminary grouping or classification of similar answers" into categories (Sjöström and Dahlgren, 2002 p. 341);
- Comparing the categories to test the borders and distinctions between each, and adjust appropriately;
- Titling each of those resultant categories to: "emphasize their essence" (Sjöström and Dahlgren, 2002 p. 341);
- A juxtaposition of the categories, using elucidatory prose to detail the differences and similarities.

These remaining activities are iteratively intertwined, so will be elaborated by a focus on productions. I discuss the outcomes, and conclude with a discussion of the realised and potential capacities of my practice.

Surfacing Meanings

My interactive interface intentionally invites inquiry of my own phenomenographic decisions, from the categories of description through the pools of meaning to the raw source data. Yet, normative phenomenography leaves behind the attachment of any specific conception to any specific respondent, except for singular illustrative quotes. My interface creates a tension to that, since Sjöström & Dahlgren (2002) remind that:

The outcome categories from a phenomenographic analysis do not constitute phenomena in the surrounding world but people's various ways of thinking about their experiences. (Sjöström and Dahlgren, 2002 p. 342)

They are prompting that the outcome space and its categories represent *second order perspective* of the entire respondent group. Contrasting perceptions within that range are potentially present even within a *single* respondent – we say things that belie what we have previously said in our sense-making. Part of the elegance of phenomenography is capturing and valuing such disparity – of being human. So, my interface's apparent triangulation between experience, respondent and category represents only a *specific* utterance/ drawing at a *specific* time. It does not necessarily indicate underlying belief systems of any respondent, but rather the totality of all respondents' experiences. The tension in my interface is that I nevertheless permit this retrospective journey to the respondent. Further, the phenomenographic process is so iterative that it may still be difficult for the interface user to comprehend the turns that have led to those attributions. That is why the interface is intended primarily as support for the exposition of this thesis. Nevertheless, it is hoped that by the interface's graphic exposure to hierarchies of information, it entices into the underlying mass of data.

Having provided such guarded elaboration of the interactive interface, a primary purpose was to provide for *me* a structure within which to collate graphic and verbal extracts of my data, and to finesse the categories of description. I initially categorised according to which of my four domains (industry, profession, education, and wider-life) responses related – careful to distinguish this from the stage of the session in which they were elicited (so some responses attach to multiple horizons). This was another step towards de-emphasising my own pragmatic structuring in favour of revealing the respondents' emerging contexts – their own external horizons. All the unfiltered extracts together represent our phenomenographic pool of meanings, but those meanings are as yet deeply embedded and under-exposed. The culmination of my preliminary grouping addresses this by another iteration of analysis. I depart from the screen again towards the more corporeally-rich, haptic (but simple) medium of paper and sticky notes. So, each extract of graphic grouping and its verbal explanation was printed, and marked-up with annotated coloured sticky notes. 102 pages of extract were analysed and annotated. The colour of the notes represented

[illegible]

Figure 5 demonstrates analysis of two extracts within the education domain. Where an extract covered multiple external horizons (such as the second example of Figure 5 that covered 'Education' and 'Wider-Life'), it was printed again and marked up with additional sticky notes of the relevant colour for the parts of the extract relating to that context. Each sticky note summarised a single salient aspect of the extract – a single meaning – and an identifier (for later update of the interactive interface) of the source of the note. This produced 316 notes, or meanings ready for yet another iteration of analysis.

Each of the 316 sticky notes were then considered in turn and transferred to an A2 board according to the note's meaning. As each note was transferred, it was considered for any correlations to existing notes on any of the boards, and if so was placed next to the existing relevant notes to form and enlarge groupings of related meanings. These activities correlate to the push-and-pull iteration between the fourth step of preliminary groupings and the fifth step of comparing the categories being formed. Where a grouping of notes appeared to indicate a specific category of conception, a large sticky note was added to tentatively indicate what that category might be. This correlate to the sixth step of initial naming of the categories. Where groupings of related meanings were beginning to have a relationship to other groupings of related meanings, both groupings of notes were moved to the same board. The phenomenographic outcome space was being slowly formed and tested

by this physical analytical process of iterative comparison, conjugation, movement, division, re-refining, and tentative titling. The smaller notes from the pools of meaning were arranged and re-arranged, and the larger notes with indicative titling of the groupings were re-written and abandoned (illustrated by the sequence of images in Figure 6).

Figure 6 – Physical Iterative Formation of the Outcome Space



Figure 7 – Set of Six A2 Boards

Categories of Description

Five distinct outcome spaces have evolved containing a total of 28 categories of description (and an additional 3 sub-categories). This testifies to the extreme breadth of the construct of employability, but also implies that it has areas across which relationships are harder to discern. Within each outcome space there have emerged between four and seven categories of description. The outcome spaces that slowly emerged described conceptions of:

- The ground of graphic design and field-specific strategies;
- Emphasis of design education;
- Motivation of endeavour;
- Balance of life;
- Self-efficacy.

Whilst each is listed above in the singular, from hereon I will refer to each in the plural (emphases, motivations, grounds, efficacies, and balances). This reminds that they constitute the *range* of experiences of the constituent categories of description, and

that whilst some descriptions may appear mutually-exclusive, they may nevertheless derive from a single person's experience. I emphasise again that *experience* here is different from its commonly conceived understanding ('Ways of Experiencing' p.80 elaborates). The details of all six boards and their resultant placing of meanings/ conceptions within the finalised categories is listed in *Life Drawing Praxis: Boards and Notes*. Whilst I provide these for transparency, caution must be exercised in a reading of these intermediate outputs of this part of the process, since certain notes may seem antagonistic to the category within which they are placed. That is because each note is a paring/ stripping-back device derived from individual extracts – and once placed elsewhere, is isolated from its context. Sjöström & Dahlgren (2002) hint at this potential incongruity in talking of: "what is most important in a particular subject's answer" (p. 341). It is apt to return to Marton & Booth's (Marton and S. Booth, 2013) deer in the woods (on page 80). There, the deer's body parts and relationships each other formed the internal horizon, and how the deer differed from the trees the external horizon, both of which help to form overall meaning (e.g. the deer is alarmed). An individual note is analogous to a single body part, but must be related to others from the same extract in its placement on the board. This relating is further complicated by the iterative process of evaluation and comparison, placement and movement in relation to all other notes in an iterative process. So, whilst particular notes may appear incongruously placed, each is simply one 'body part' and it would be misguided to treat them in isolation from their associated 'body parts' from the same extract. This frequently meant referring back to the original graphic and textual extract, and even the original transcript for wider context. This practice is consistent with Sjöström & Dahlgren's (2002) description of this stage:

In practice, some indicators may be used for assessing the significance of elements in an answer. Some of these are frequency, for example, how often a meaningful statement is articulated; position – very often the most significant elements are to be found in the introductory parts of an answer, and finally pregnancy, for example, when the subject explicitly emphasizes that certain aspects are more important than others. (Sjöström and Dahlgren, 2002 p. 341)

Each note alone is devoid of these 'indicators'. I was tempted to remove the apparently jarring notes from my exposition, but to remove these notes would misrepresent the iterative complexities of phenomenography. But it may explain

why, within writing on the subject, the practical detail of the phenomenographic process sometimes appears underdeveloped. That is, questions of what precisely one should see at which point elude – they are a matter of researcher interpretation. They are enduringly contestable. Like the design process, the practitioner follows previous experience, acquired knowledge, and established process frameworks to realise outputs, but one knows that replicability cannot be guaranteed – only the rationale for our choices either accepted or rejected.

So, the placement of these notes is an intermediate part of my phenomenographic practice – towards the greater goal of categorising the extracts from the pool of meaning, and ultimately towards complete descriptions of those categories. Success is, ultimately, that the resultant outcome spaces and their categories adequately address the conceptions of the respondents' graphic and verbal responses. There follows a detailed exposition of each of the 28 categories of description with, in the tradition of phenomenography, a single respondent exemplar for each that contains the relevant graphic and verbal extract as illustration. All other corresponding underlying source data from constituent blankets and respondent extracts for any of the categories can be interrogated using the *Life Drawing Interactive Interface* at <http://lifedrawing.graphics>. Again, this is counter to the normative presentation of phenomenographic analyses, whereby the focus is usually diverted from the individual conception to the collective categories. But it is hoped that by permitting a reciprocity with categories – being *amongst* the data rather than simply looking on – the reader is additionally critiquing (and therefore assessing for her or his self) the meanings and relationships of the categories and data. Harris (2011) concludes, in her extensive analysis of phenomenographic perspectives adopted within 56 studies, that: “few researchers... actually step the reader through the process of analysis undertaken” (Harris, 2011 p. 117) to justify their outcome framework. It is hoped that my elaboration has provided a sense of how the graphic and verbal extracts of this research led to the identification of conceptions; and how these were then physically manipulated on sticky notes and large boards to iteratively and gradually form clusters of associated conceptions. Those clusters have each formed a category of description, and from those categories of description have emerged five distinct outcome spaces. The primary formation of the five outcome spaces was through the detailed analysis of the

blankets described. Whilst it was: “reconsidered in the light of additional transcripts.” (Åkerlind, 2012 p. 122), the additional graphic artefacts and associated verbal transcripts did not extend the outcome spaces, though some did influence the syntax of the descriptors of categories. I suspected that I had reached ‘saturation’ after analysis of a further three blankets, and this was confirmed by a further three. That was because I was adhering to the phenomenographic principle that:

repetition of the same view is then ignored; phenomenography is intended to define the limits of how a phenomenon is experienced rather than what is normative. (Alsop and Tompsett, 2006 p. 247)

Prior to presenting the outcome spaces, Harris (2011) recommends that I articulate the terminology of the framework that I use in their exposition.

Framework

Harris (2011) indicates that many phenomenographers, though not all, use one of two frameworks (and sometimes a conflation of the two) to: “enhance the study of conceptions.” (Harris, 2011 p. 109). One framework distinguishes the what and how aspects of conceptions (often situated in learning and teaching research as separating what people learn from how they learn it). My research is not oriented towards respondents’ levels of understanding, but towards discursive appreciation of the ways of experiencing employability. Therefore, I employ the alternative framework that:

creates a distinction between referential and structural aspects which allows the parts and contexts of the conception to be identified; its second level includes the internal and external horizons. (Harris, 2011 p. 109)

Harris elaborates that many of her 56 analysed texts claim such a framework but, in practice, what was intended by referential, structural, internal horizon and external horizon was often not elaborated and/or had: “weak links to theory” (p. 109).

Nevertheless, Harris states that:

while they [the frameworks adopted] may not be strongly grounded in theory, when clearly defined, they can provide a method to ‘think apart’ important distinctions within conceptions. (Harris, 2011 p. 109)

In that ethos of ‘thinking apart distinctions’, I offer what I mean by my terms. I adapt terminology from Marton (1988) to define *Referential* within my outcome spaces as:

meaning, in the sense of categorising the communication intent of respondents' conceptions – what is being said of what. Within each outcome space, a table delineates my emergent categories. To aid that delineation, each category is summatively titled and briefly described. Consequential meanings and boundaries are discussed in more detail in the text that proceeds each table. I similarly define *Structural* in my outcome spaces as representing: *the hierarchies and sequences (implicit or explicit) of and between categories – how each category relates to the others.* I provide a graphic figure to summarise the relationships between the categories. Further clarification is provided within the proceeding text to that figure.

The *Referential* table, then, predominantly describes how categories differ (and limits of difference), whereas the *Structural* figure focuses on how they are similar (and limits of similarity), so that a single outcome space is formed. This back-and-to between the *Referential* and *Structural* is what Marton (1988) identifies as: “the dialect relationship between these two aspects” (Marton, 1988 p. 59) – though he was comparing the terms within the context of how people learn. That difference between Marton’s context and my research is significant, since my use of this specific terminology has a more illustrative intent – of maximising the clarity of outcomes – rather than referring to related theories of learning and teaching.

It is with similar intent that I use the terms *Internal Horizon* and *External Horizon*. *Internal Horizon* in my outcome spaces means: *aspects that distinguish one category from another.* Marton (1988) and Harris (2011) use these designations strictly as a ‘second level’ of the *Structural* aspect. Whilst I follow this in outlining *Internal Horizons* in my *Structural* figures, I permit that *Referential* descriptions also infer internal distinctions between categories. *External Horizon* in my research refers to: *the background domains within which conceptions emerge,* but is directly referenced neither within the table nor the figure of each outcome space. That is because (by inquiring around the phenomenon rather than about it) the *External Horizon* in my research often differs within each *individual* conception rather than by *collective* category. *External Horizon* has been identified, where appropriate, in general terms within the outcome space prose, and is displayed when hovering over conceptions within the interactive interface at <http://lifedrawing.graphics> as either *Education, Industry, Profession* or *Wider*.

Now that I have defined my use of terminology, the following text details each of the categories of description. Every category is outlined, described and exemplified according to the declarations I have just outlined, and grouped within one of the five outcome spaces. The significance of emergent outcome spaces is considered in conclusions.

Grounds Outcome Space

This outcome space categorises respondents' experience of the grounds of the graphic design field/ industry, and the pertaining strategies (professional pathways).

Table 1 – Grounds Referential Overview

	the ground of the graphic design field or industry as...		professional pathways as...
heterogeneous	numerous separate entities; which are related in a way that portrays implicit hierarchies (e.g. 'branching off' or 'streams'), or that are separate in some other way (e.g. 'in-house' within another industry).		hawk not necessarily correlating with industry entities (GD industry might 'affect' or 'touch' one's profession, but doesn't contain it). One becomes the active hunter of opportunity.
interrelated	numerous separate entities, which are related in a way that are mutually dependent (e.g. 'interconnected' or 'blurred').		chameleon highly malleable, conceiving the practitioner's refusal to be defined/ pigeon-holed as prized asset. One adapts to prevailing environments and requirements.
equivocal	multiply discernible; determined by the character of specific entities (e.g. big 'business' versus 'dynamic'), or by their own outlook or interests (e.g. 'advertising' versus 'Swiss design').		panda offering an environment with limited broader appeal, but ideally suited to the practitioner. It is recognised that there may be greater rewards externally, but those rewards are conceived as unlikely to be as nutritious/ satiating.
homogeneous	a single entity; often monolithic or omnipresent, and often with a power imbalance giving rise to negative sub-perspectives (below).		bee tending towards being within. The critical stance correlates with fears about control, exploitation, freedom, and loss of (particularly creative) identity. One is a member of the hive under the aegis of its leader.
	reducing	a homogeneous entity that is either dehumanising or creatively void, with the consequence that this will reduce the people within (e.g. 'dull', 'swallow you up', 'remove your style').	
	closed	a homogeneous entity with defensive gateways (e.g. 'like Fort Knox', 'barbed wire' 'hard to escape', 'square concrete walls').	
	insecure	a homogeneous entity with dubious expectations or employment practices (e.g. must be 'on-trend', they are 'fickle', 'drop you when their done', you are 'spat out').	

The outcome space emerges exclusively from respondents' conceptions of industry and professional life, and thus the domains of *Industry* and *Profession* form the external horizons of these category of description. The relationships between its categories of description are outlined by Figure 8. This represents that two planetary poles emerged from the data – conceptions of homogeneity and heterogeneity within graphic design as practised. Two alternative conceptions emerged of the ground between those poles. Each of these central conceptions tended to suggest a correlating satellite conception – what we might term the respondent's potential professional strategies. It seemed appropriate to analogise these by reference to strategies of adaptation within nature. Each position and analogy is elaborated individually below.

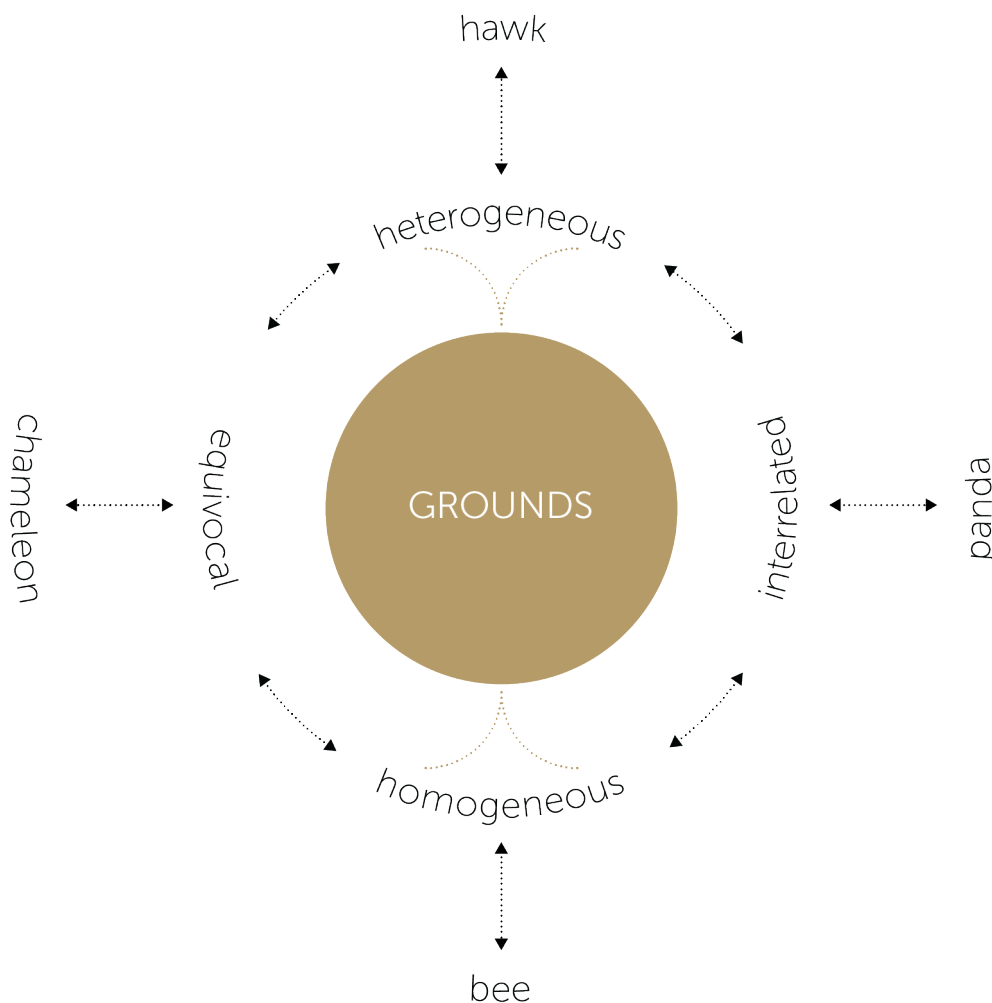


Figure 8 – Grounds Structural Overview as Planet

Heterogeneous/ Hawk

The Heterogeneous category of description summarises conceptions of the ground of the graphic design field or industry:

as numerous separate entities; which are related in a way that portrays implicit hierarchies (e.g. 'branching off' or 'streams'), or that are separate in some other way (e.g. 'in-house' within another industry). (Table 1)

This implies options on entry, but commitment to specialise; so, horizontal transitions are likely to involve more significant effort. This category has a tendency to correlate with the Hawk category of description, which elaborates conceptions of professional pathways as:

not necessarily correlating with industry entities (GD industry might 'affect' or 'touch' one's profession, but doesn't contain it). One becomes the active hunter of opportunity. (Table 1)

Career shifts are posited as the norm, and that respondents don't necessarily conceive remaining within the industry/ field as a consequence of the other options being available. For instance, this respondent's conception of industry:

[24:51.1]: I think in terms of what disciplines corporate design goes into, it's quite broad and not very sort of defining... switch and flick between... loads of different ones at the same time... and sort of leaks off in different ways... probably quite a fast-flowing one... it's very sort of quick and [clicking fingers] constantly flowing, constantly moving. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Industry 07*).

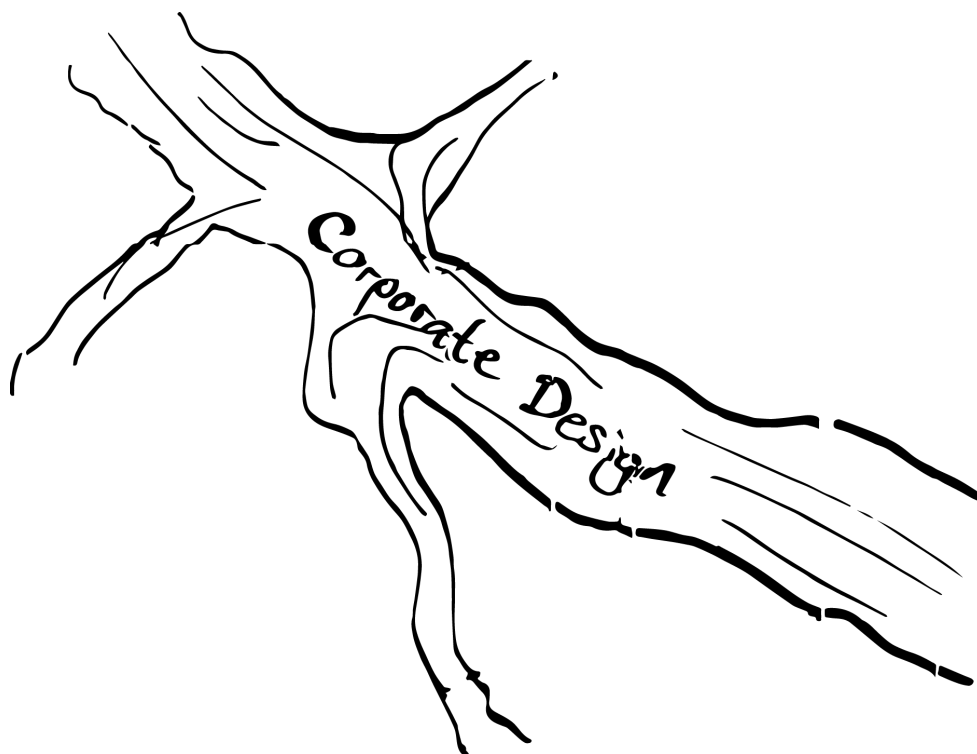


Figure 9 – Industry as River (Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Industry 07)

This correlates with the respondent's professional strategy, where one gets a sense of latitude and liberation – a 'flying over' the ground, like a hawk:

[23:58.4] I... wouldn't want to work solely in this industry... because of my interests and what captures my attention can be quite broad and random sometimes... [24:37.3] It just might run through it... branch off into... affect my professional plans. But it's not what drives it... It touches on my plans or what I hope to achieve but it's not the boundaries. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 07*).

Interrelated/ Chameleon

The Interrelated category of description summarises conceptions of the ground of the graphic design field or industry as:

numerous separate entities, which are related in a way that are mutually dependent (e.g. 'interconnected' or 'blurred'). (Table 1)

This implies options both on entry and significant horizontal transitions within. It has a tendency to correlate with the Chameleon category of description, which elaborates conceptions of professional pathways as:

highly malleable, conceiving the practitioner's refusal to be defined/ pigeon-holed as prized asset. One adapts to prevailing environments and requirements. (Table 1)

This metamorphism may consequently include an expectation of serial encounters within the field. This respondent exemplifies the description of industry as 'graphic design', but nevertheless with interconnected diverse aspects within:

[27:08.5] Industries are changing, you know... Industries change and industries bend and you have to... either swap over or you find a fresh way of doing stuff within that industry... [28:17.0] It's all interconnected because of the way the world works these days... it's not about [people] being defined in the future... [30:16.8] I think it'll still called... graphic design... it's about discovering the new potential... [34:02.8]: People can... expand, like I said, with graphic design. But at the end of the day, you're still defined by the industry, primarily. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Industry 02*).

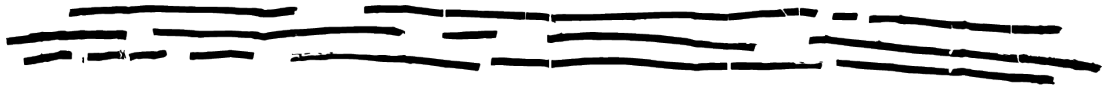


Figure 10 – Industry as Lines (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Industry 02*)

The strategy conceived by the respondent is clear – one hops between changing environments, adapting one's practices/ *métier* to thrive:

[23:02.9] These different lines represent different career paths... I think graphic designs is... very transferable. The skills that you learn are very transferable through different, different areas... It's good that you can be quite powerful... [25:57.3] One ends, you just work on the other two. That one ends and you work on these two... I think it's, it's a bit crazy the idea to contain yourself to one... if you're a graphic designer. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 02A*).

Equivocal/ Panda

The Equivocal category of description summarises conceptions of the ground of the graphic design field or industry as:

multiply discernible; determined by the character of specific entities (e.g. big 'business' versus 'dynamic'), or by their own outlook or interests (e.g. 'advertising' versus 'Swiss design'). (Table 1)

This implies that one's own mind-set dictates direction with specific potential, but requires determination. This purposeful specialisation correlates with the Panda category of description, which elaborates conceptions of profession as:

offering an environment with limited broader appeal, but ideally suited to the practitioner. It is recognised that there may be greater rewards externally, but those rewards are conceived as unlikely to be as nutritious/ satiating. (Table 1)

Excursion from 'safe ground' for greater reward is not excluded, but not sought – these respondents metaphorically eat bamboo so want to be where bamboo grows. For instance, this respondent describes industry as multiple 'hills' forming the relief of a landscape, but the important point is that the respondent has a sense of belonging firmly on one hill (this, he describes as large and smooth *for him* demonstrating he accepts this as a matter of *his* perspective, that it is his optimal comfort-zone, and that it will be different for others:

[25:22.7] ...The graphic design industry there's... different peaks to that. So there's... the peak of... advertising, which I think controls everything. But I don't necessarily think it controls me... a peak for someone else, whereas it's going to be a lesser peak for me. So it's a very kind of sharp peak because it's got a lot of... definition within the industry. It controls a lot within the industry. It's very powerful. It makes a lot of money. But isn't necessarily particularly important to me. Whereas if I look at sort of minimalist graphics, Swiss graphics, which I'm very, very interested in, perhaps doesn't have the same amount of... prowess in terms of making money... So I think the peak of that is much... is kind of much less rigid, much less controlling, it's much softer. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Industry 11*).

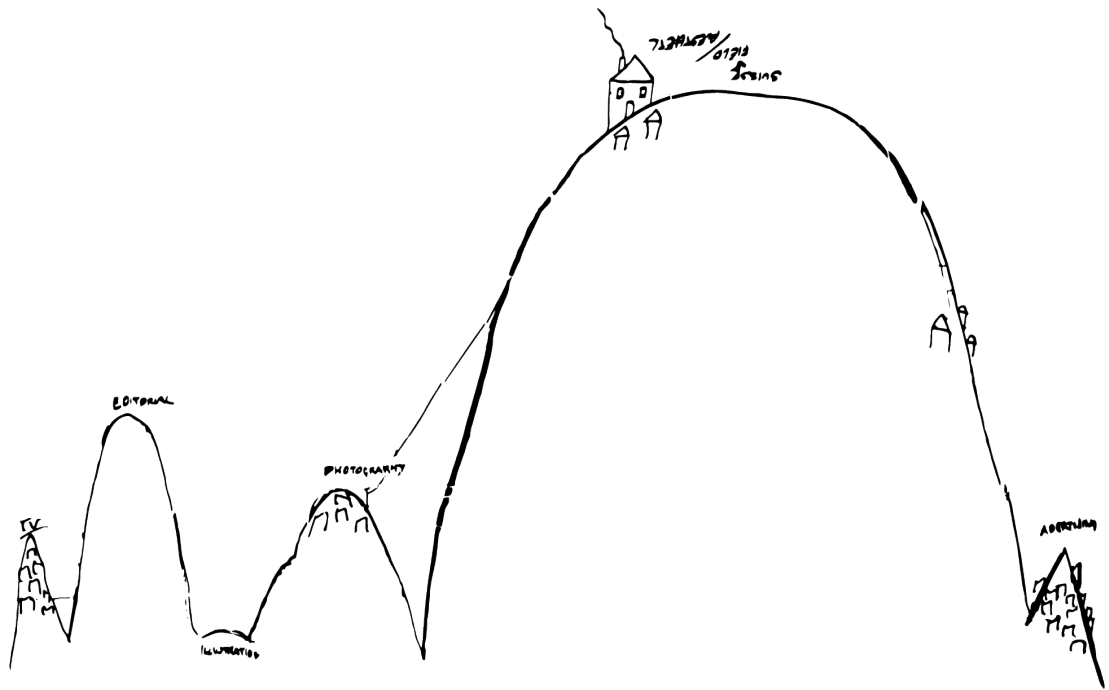


Figure 11- Industry as Mountain (Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Industry 11)

The strategy, then, is to build oneself a firm home base, but ensure that you have easy access to others with related concerns (both creative and pecuniary):

[32:20.0] I think... of... a house atop a hill... So you've got ownership of that field. It's kind of where you're... you're focused... [but]... you've perhaps maybe got a sort of zip wire or something... between photography and what you're doing here, because it sort of depends so much on it. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 11*)

Homogenous/ Bee

The Homogenous category of description summarises conceptions of the ground of the graphic design field or industry as:

a single entity; often monolithic or omnipresent, and often with a power imbalance giving rise to negative sub-perspectives (below). (Table 1)

This implies a narrow normative trajectory; conceptions of difficulty in entering or transitioning, and conceptions potentially of industry as potentially subsuming. As there are three distinct sub-groupings of conceptions within the *Homogenous* category (creating three sub-categories), it is better to illustrate each independently. The first sub-category describes conceptions of:

a homogeneous entity that is either dehumanising or creatively void, with the consequence that this will reduce the people within (e.g. 'dull', 'swallow you up', 'remove your style'). (Table 1)

This was a wider-held conception than others, potentially related to innate fears about much-fetishized 'creativity' and its loss. For instance:

[23:11.9] Industry is... a UFO... It's something that's kind of out of control of anybody that isn't in the industry... and they can suck you up and you can become part of the industry. But only if you're, like, an interesting specimen and they want to, like, probe you... to clone in their own image... From making good work... you go through all of this personal development inside your head, just to get to this kind of idyllic place in your work. And it's like a culmination of everything you've learnt and everything you enjoy and you're interested in. And then industry... has the potential to come down and, like, take you up with it. And at some point it might decide that it's done with you and it's bored... and it drops you back down like cows. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Industry 06*)

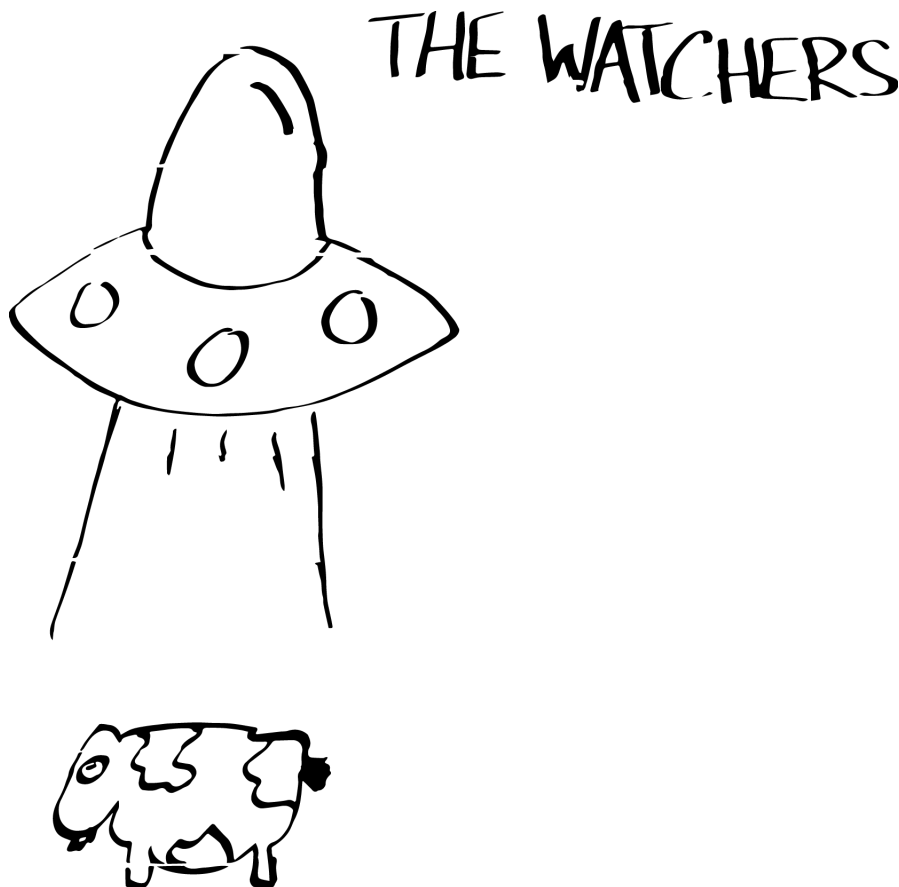


Figure 12 – Industry as UFO (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Industry 06*)

The second *Homogeneous* sub-category contains conceptions of:

a homogeneous entity with defensive gateways (e.g. 'like Fort Knox', 'barbed wire' 'hard to escape', 'square concrete walls'). (Table 1)

Not only is this a creatively-treacherous place, it is well-defended from outsiders who may not conform:

[15:36.3] Industry looks like an office. So it's something very robust and... conforming... just a box... there isn't any, like, definition to it. That's... [a] bit bleak... Even if it was really nice or whatever... I never envisioned myself... doing that, which is weird because that is a possibility. So I think I actually have a very, almost quite a bleak view... it's going to be quite ordered. I see industry as being very ordered. It's square... I think the boundaries are just very... very thick, like a concrete structure... conformity. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Industry 12*)



Figure 13 – Industry as Concrete Square (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Industry 12*)

The respondents of the final *Homogeneous* sub-category conceive:

a homogeneous entity with dubious expectations or employment practices (e.g. must be 'on-trend', they are 'fickle', 'drop you when their done', you are 'spat out'). (Table 1)

It can be seen here why these sub-categories nevertheless belong within the overarching *Homogenous* category of description – because, whilst conceiving of distinct traits, they are often mentioned in unison (i.e. creatively-draining, fortified, and

dubiously-ethical). For instance, the following respondent has conceptions within all three sub-categories:

[24:38.9] To me, the industry is going to be like a big tornado. And then at the bottom... a little person being spat out... The top of the tornado... along it some kind of barbed wire. So you go in that way. It's very difficult to get into at a certain level. And when you do get in... I think it could swallow you up... [25:37.3] A couple of big... agencies here... very recently they fired thirteen staff... [and] taking on three or four... work placement year students, and getting the most out of them. Uh. I think that's not very good ethics, to be quite honest. Money sometimes dictates your ethics, I suppose... [in] business... chew you up, spit you out... you've been there for years, and then... you're gone and a student's in your place. [26:26.3] It... seems to be a very tickle industry and also with trends, if you're not on top of them, you're out. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Industry 04*)

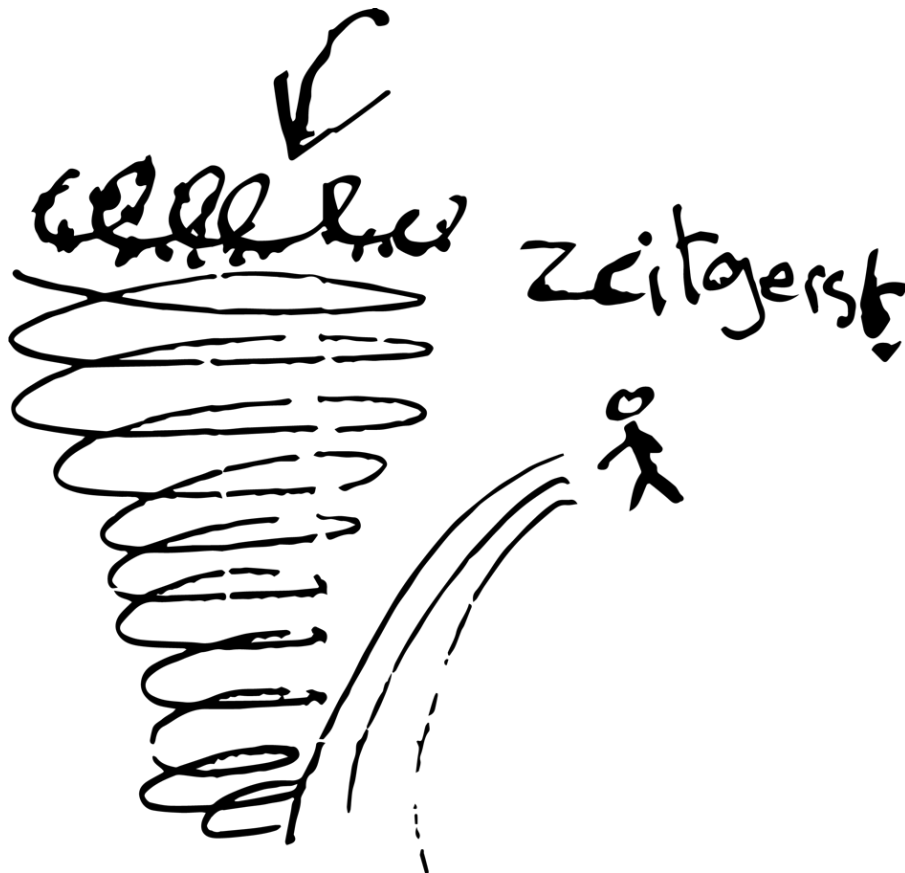


Figure 14 – Industry as Tornado (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Industry 04*)

This coalescence of the three sub-categories within the *Homogeneous* category has a tendency to correlate with the Bee category of description, which elaborates conceptions of professional pathways as:

tending towards being within. The critical stance correlates with fears about control, exploitation, freedom, and loss of (particularly creative) identity. One is a member of the hive under the aegis of its leader, or consistently resisting such. (Table 1)

Whilst this represents the themes of conceptions amongst respondents within the *Homogenous* category, the specific strategies within that vary. So, the respondent above (author of Figure 14) states:

[26:26.3] So I don't really know. I'm going on what I see, going on what I'm told. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Industry 04*)

It is, perhaps, significant that whilst the following graphic extract (see Figure 15) represents what this respondent conceives of profession, there is no traceable verbal explanation of it from him. But it appears to need little explanation, since the respondent falls-back on a very normative graphic design pathway:

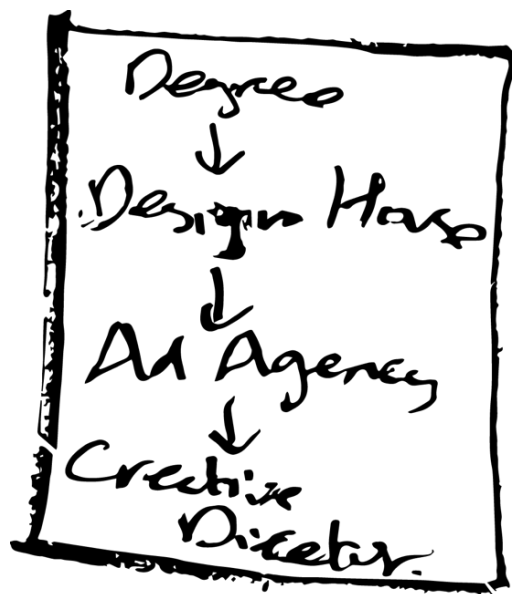


Figure 15 – Profession as Flow (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 04*)

Under such apparently hegemonic conceptions of industry, it is unsurprising that there may be lack of capitulation from graphic designers – as illustrated by the respondent from the first sub-category (author of Figure 12):

[19:01.2] Being a graphic designer... more often than not you're working for other people. So it's important that people enjoy using... artwork that you

made... even if you go completely subversive and throw the client out the window. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 06*)

The author of the final sub-category's illustration (Figure 13) returns to the theme of the unknown, and even the consequent fear, but is ultimately led towards an optimistic openness to the possibilities this yields:

[12:28.2] It's ... some scary thing. It's like completely unknown. I can't envisage it at all. [25:06.4] It represents the unknown but it also represents... opening a door... Have you ever seen the film [The Truman Show] ... he literally lived his life in this film set... and then the last scene is him just sort of opening this door...? So yeah, optimistic, I guess. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 12*)

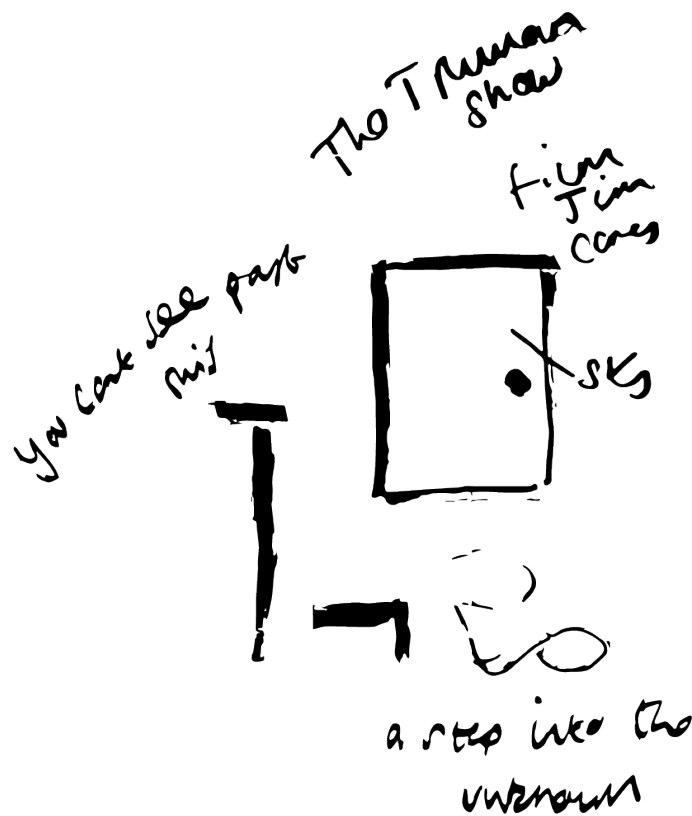


Figure 16 – Profession as Door (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 12*)

This section has elaborated the referential and structural aspects of the *Grounds Outcome Space*, and provided supporting examples from respondent verbal and graphic artefacts. The significance of the outcome space as a whole is considered in conclusions.

Emphases Outcome Space

This outcome space categorises respondents' experience of graphic design education through descriptions that indicate dominant emphases within that education.

Table 2 – Emphases Referential Overview

	emphasis of graphic design education as...
core	learning/ education situated at core/ central/ over-arching future practice within graphic design, often with postulations about the importance of continued learning.
transformative	personal growth and high-level transformation.
conceptual	idea and concept.
process	design process, iteration, ambiguities, and rationalisation of process.
craft skills	technical vocational or craft skills.
professionalism	personal meta-attributes for practice within graphic design or wider.
professional practice	learning from practice within the intended future-environment.

This *Emphases Outcome Space* appears more one-dimensional than the *Grounds Outcome Space*, with the respondents' external horizon (naturally) dominated by *Education*. But that simplicity belies the grouping of relationships between its categories of description, which are outlined by Figure 17. 'Core' is agnostic towards the other categories, and by that has a potential relationship with each, so in my working is central. The remaining six categories, by their respective pairings, form three groupings, which have correlation to the three environments of Schenk's (2016) "Three Environments Model of Drawing in Design" (Schenk, 2016 p. 196). Schenk describes the *Intellectual Environment* as: "the cognitive domain of knowledge and understanding, of memory and imagination." (2016 p. 195). The *Practice Environment* she states as: "the territory of studio-based creative practice; one of

actual places and real materials, where ideas materialize and the tacit becomes explicit.”. And the *Technical Environment* is said to be: “the setting for the employment of specialist techniques and equipment... of technical ingenuity and know-how.” I unpack the respective correlations within *Emphases* as I elaborate each category of description.

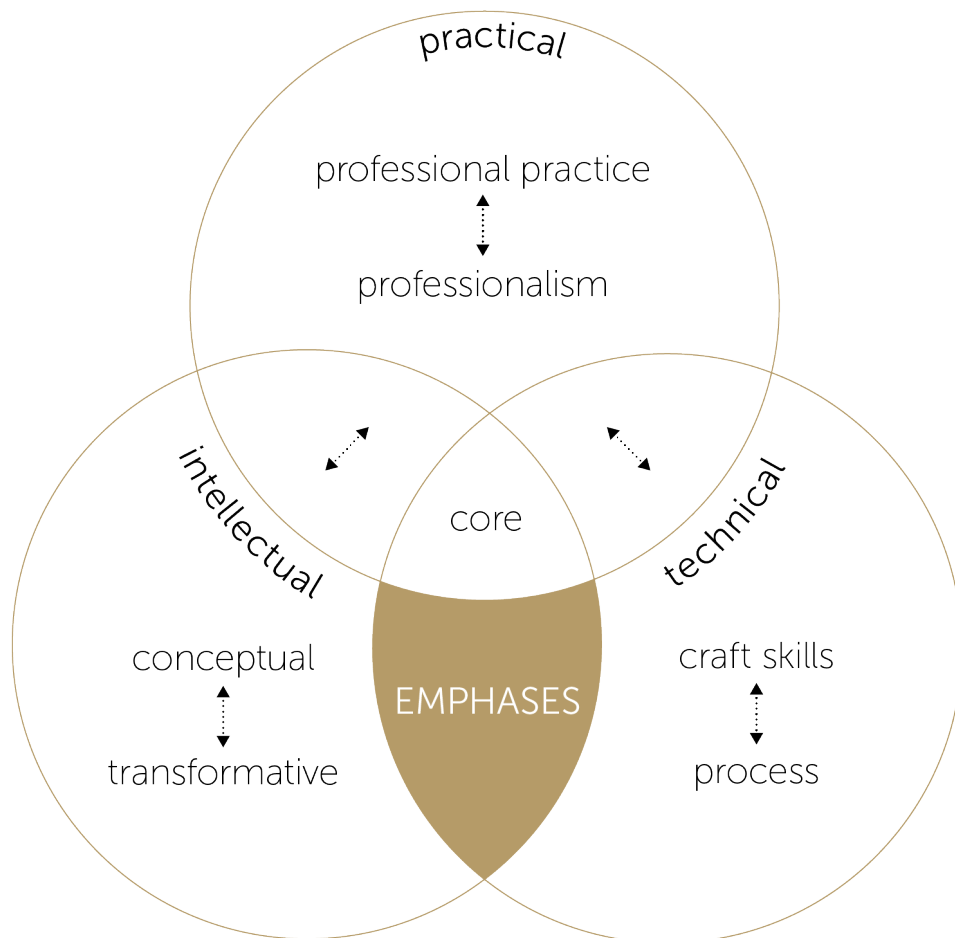


Figure 17 – Emphases Structural Overview as Venn – after Schenk (2016)

Core

The Core category of description summarises conceptions of the emphasis of graphic design education as:

learning/ education situated at core/ central/ over-arching future practice within graphic design, often with postulations about the importance of continued learning. (Table 2)

This appears liberating. For instance, this respondent locates education centrally, with the conception that this can always be returned to, if required, for new direction or inspiration:

[00:47.9] The potential for more learning is infinity... The spikes represent... the kind of direction I can go into... in the centre... where I started... it goes outwards... I took short courses between my summer holidays, interns during my... time off as well, so... I've had graphic education from different institutions... I think the spikes represent that... there's so much things I can go off to... [30:24.0] How it kind of gets narrow in the end... represents how severe it may be... [but] it's not the end of the world because there are... multiple spikes [to] find your way through. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 08*)

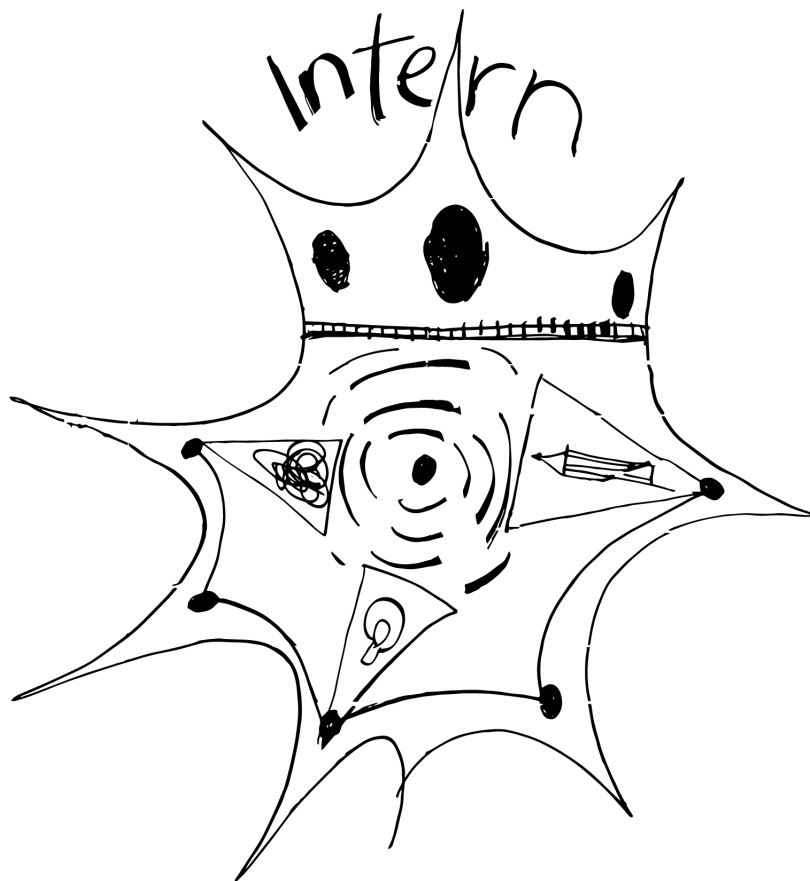


Figure 18 – Education as Spikes (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 08*)

It is significant that whilst education is placed as core, the respondent nevertheless conceives the 'crowning' of that education as an internship providing:

[06:26.7] ... a very, very good learning experience. You get to learn so much that you don't learn in university... The irony is that you go out in industry, you work with people... how university is meant to be, a place where you explore

and meet people and... collaborate. But then that's... more active when you're out in the industry... My intern[ship] is... a positive highlight. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 08*)

So, education is core, but isn't necessarily thought optimised *within* the academic institute. The conception of education as *Core* alongside other simultaneous positions is common –accounting for this conception's relationships with all others.

Transformative

The Transformative category of description summarises conceptions of the emphasis of graphic design education as:

personal growth and high-level transformation. (Table 2)

This extract illustrates conception of an holistic metamorphosis through design education, first encountered by the respondent at college:

[10:05.2] College was amazing!... I think there's a real excitement when you're first finding your creativity... I did a BTEC that enabled me to... just do anything I wanted. To go from everything to then refine it is a better way [than] trying to go larger... It was kind of like life-changing. I know it sounds really clichéd but I... took a chance to do something that I liked and never looked back. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 05*)

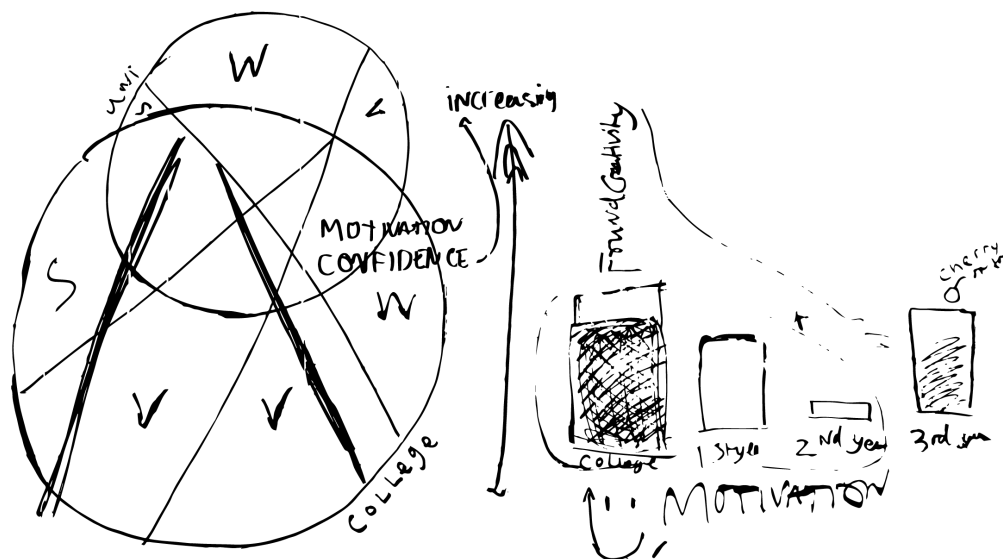


Figure 19 – Education as Venn & Bars (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 05*)

The verbal context is the high-thinking notion of “finding” of the respondents’ own “creativity”, but its effects are tangible – associated diagrammatically with an

increase in both motivation and confidence. Such growth was a revelation for another respondent:

[05:28.8] I've learnt more intellectually through being through art school because you take the time to learn your own interests. You know, you might come across a philosopher or a certain artist and actually that really helps you to grow as a person. That's something I never really... thought would happen... higher and then higher... and you're learning more and you sort of surprise yourself that you've sort of grown... learning, broadening your view of your mind. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 12*)

Conceptual

The Conceptual category of description summarises conceptions of the emphasis of graphic design education as:

idea and concept. (Table 2)

This verbal extract exemplifies such a conception (also demonstrating the *Core* conception):

[00:40.3] Education kind of seems key to me... It's one big circle... with... sections [that]... intersect... [05:38.1] The most important aspect is... creativity, concept, and ideas... It's obviously vital to learn the tools, but anybody these days can pick-up how to learn Photoshop. That does not make them a graphic designer... if it's a bad idea... it's never going to be great. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 04*)

The *Core* category is emphatically illustrated within the accompanying graphic, (alongside most of the other categories within this outcome space). Nevertheless, above all is the respondent's *Conceptual* emphasis, since it is deemed the largest (one third) element of the whole:

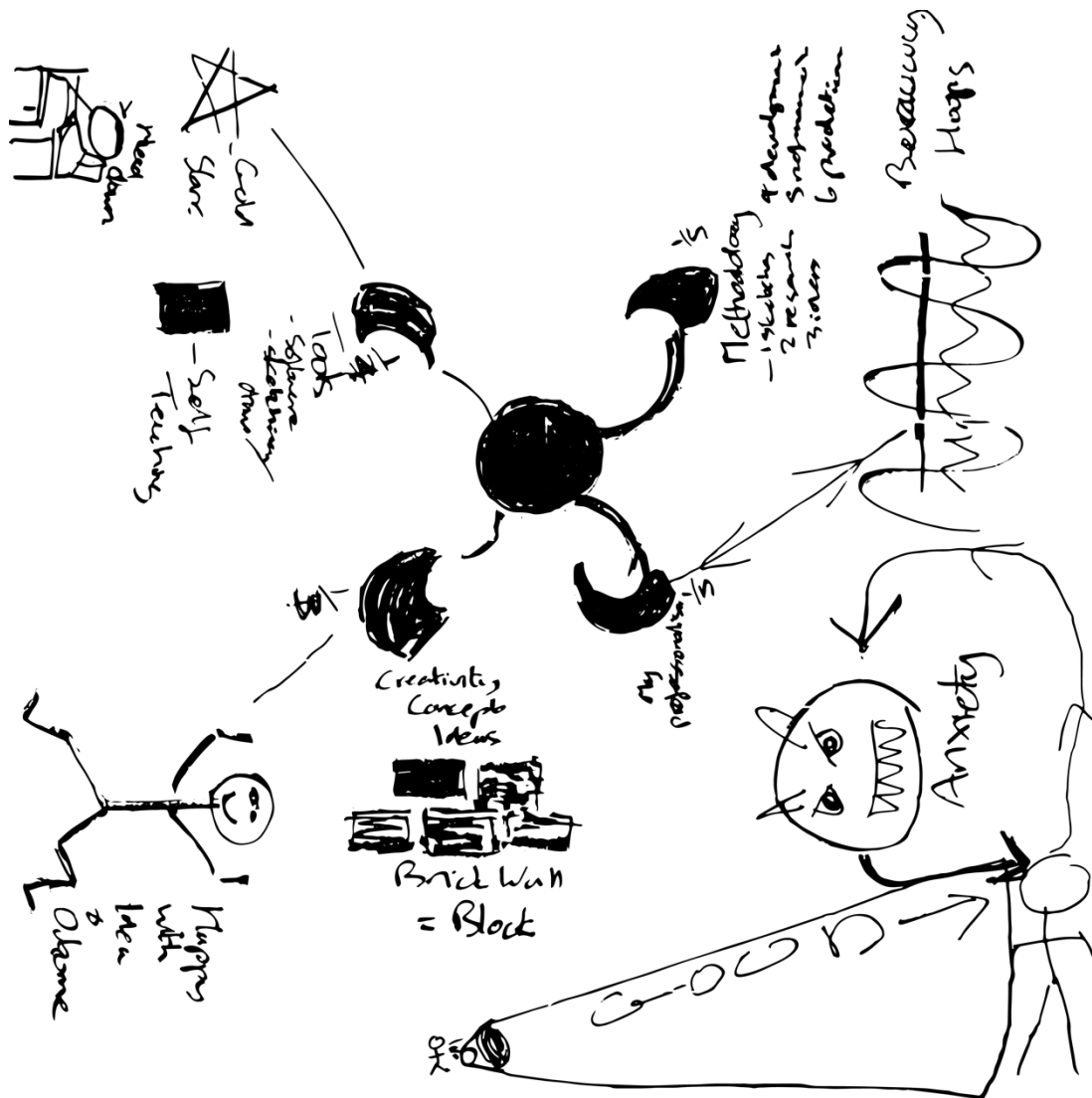


Figure 20 – Education as Trumpet (Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 04)

The *Conceptual* category in Figure 17 thus appears as the inner term of the *Intellectual* circle, and the *Transformative* category as its paired outer term. The implication is that whilst both relate to higher-thinking (Intellect), it is being able to generate concept (ideate) that *enables* subsequent transformation. This notion of paired enabler and product carries across to the other circles of that diagram.

Process

The Process category of description summarises conceptions of the emphasis of graphic design education as:

design process, iteration, ambiguities, and rationalisation of process. (Table 2)

The author of the earlier Figure 18 (with crowned education) elaborates his pencil and lightbulb symbols in these terms:

[03:13.7] You start... collecting and researching and everything and... you're not sure about solution... where... [you] have this kind of confusion in your head. Which is... a very important design process... makes the whole thing interesting, but at the same time challenges... I... had a workshop... [where the] point was... 'Don't be afraid to not to have a solution when you're doing a design process'... [That] stuck with me. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 08*)

Notwithstanding a recording fault preventing verbal extract for the following respondent, she provides a good graphic indication of this category of conception, indicated by arrows linking learning to doing iteratively:

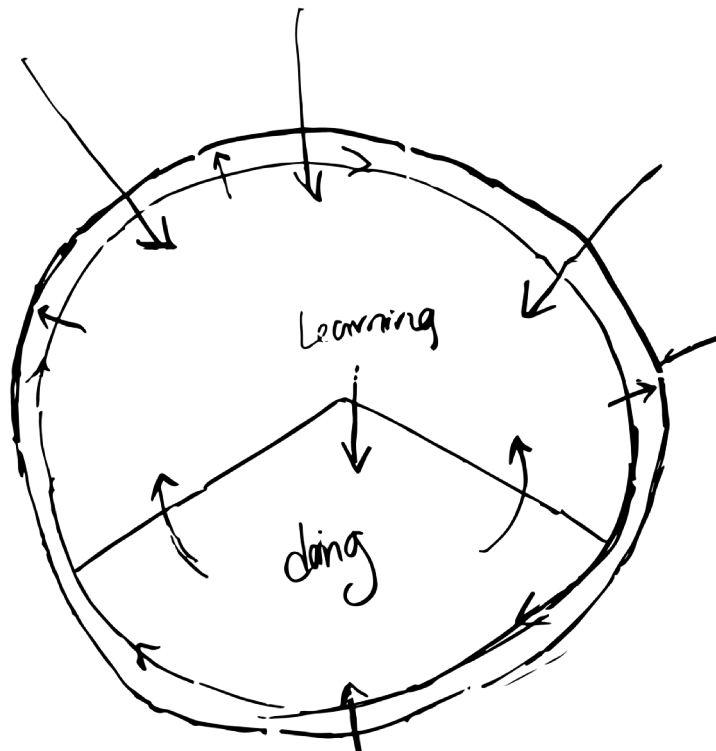


Figure 21 – Education as Learning & Doing (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 10*)

Craft Skills

The Craft Skills category of description summarises conceptions of the emphasis of graphic design education as:

technical vocational or craft skills. (Table 2)

These, as the inner term of the *Technical* environment of Figure 17, represents the enabler of the design process described above. Many respondents mention such skills, and this respondent conceives that a focus on computerisation within graphic design education has subjugated her own craft skills with dramatic impact:

[05:20.7] Even though it should be what sets me apart... [I'm trapped in] a cage... I'm definitely a lot more competent in my drawing skills, which I know can set me apart... And that's what I enjoy most. [21:27.1] I choose graphics, just because I want to be able to get that message out to people in a way that they'd understand, but still have... freedom... that's what I pictured, anyway, before... [21:59.5] I still had that freedom to be able to like, express myself... not confined... Whereas now... it's crushed me.

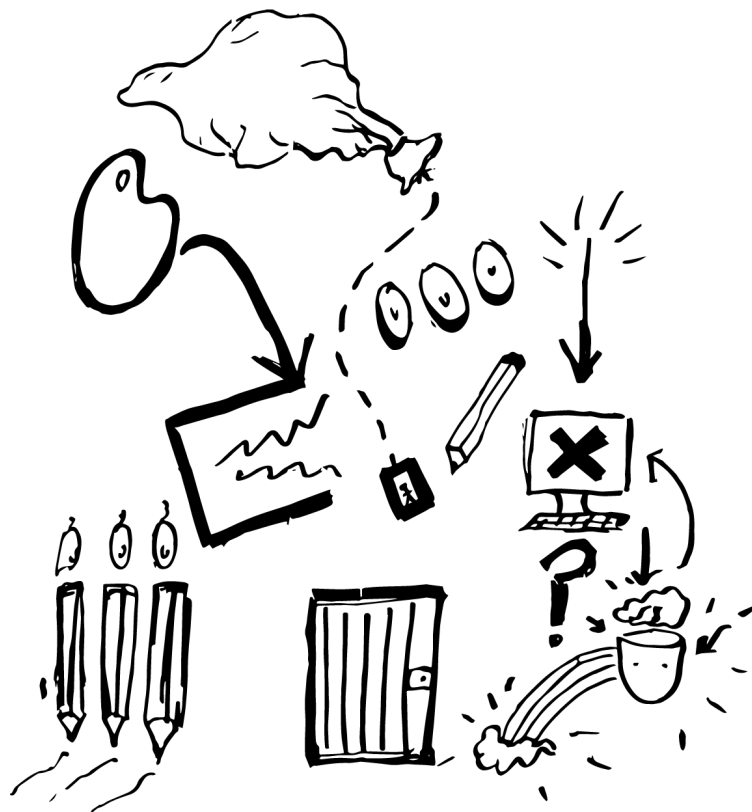


Figure 22– Education as Tech Trap (Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 03)

Professionalism

The Professionalism category of description summarises conceptions of the emphasis of graphic design education as:

personal meta-attributes for practice within graphic design or wider. (Table 2)

This conception is rarely mentioned, and this respondent has spent a good deal of time in the workplace prior to his degree:

[05:38.1] Professionalism... [is] turning up on time, making sure you respect the tutors and they respect you... I think everybody's been at loggerheads with certain aspects of the course or certain aspects of tutors. And you just have to try and work and get round that... get over it and make it kind of work for you.

In the related graphic extract (Figure 20), this ranks alongside design process in importance, contrasting with respondents not exposed to professional environments.

Professional Practice

The Professional Practice category of description summarises conceptions of the emphasis of graphic design education as:

learning from practice within the intended future-environment. (Table 2)

Whilst few respondents relate conceptions of the professionalism that she or he brings *to* the workplace, many emphasise what they have taken *from* early forays into that environment. I relate the two conceptions under the *Practice* environment in Figure 17, positioning *Professional Practice* as enabled by *Professionalism*. This respondent is not alone in conceiving that:

[07:30.8] the meaningful parts for me would be... the internships... Internship times are really valuable because... you learn so much in such a short period of time... especially when it's your first internship you start to get such a better idea of... where you want to go with your practice in the future [and]... professional skills... [and]... you don't have to tick boxes in an internship... In uni, you have to tick boxes... You can focus on making the work as successful as possible, rather than on particularly showing your process or showing research and just ticking boxes. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education* 11

Figure 18, with crown representing the respondent's internship, relates the elation of forming this conception. The graphic extract below demonstrates, too, the positive, steep (vertical) positive learning experienced in this environment:

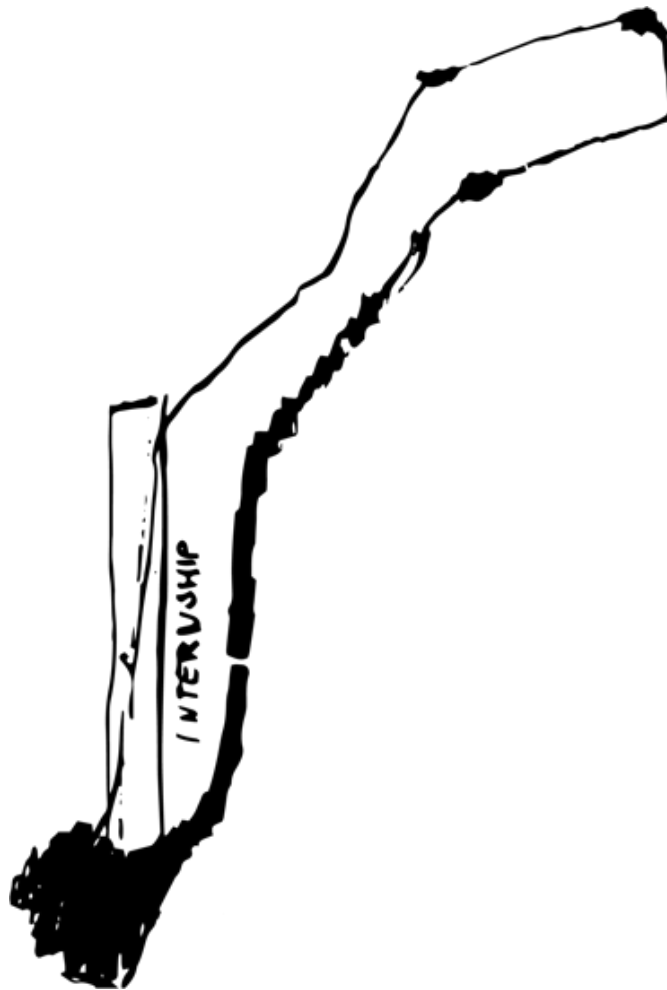


Figure 23 – Education as Loop & Umbrellas (Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 11)

But there is a caution about future-environment based learning, as demonstrated by the following graphic extract of Figure 24. This respondent did not attain the mandated placement within his educational programme – ‘Fat Man’ is the name on his emotional bombshell. The explosive impact for the respondent demonstrates the safety mechanisms required around this category of emphasis.

This section has elaborated the referential and structural aspects of the *Emphases Outcome Space*, and provided supporting examples from respondent verbal and graphic artefacts. The whole outcome space’s significance is considered in conclusions.

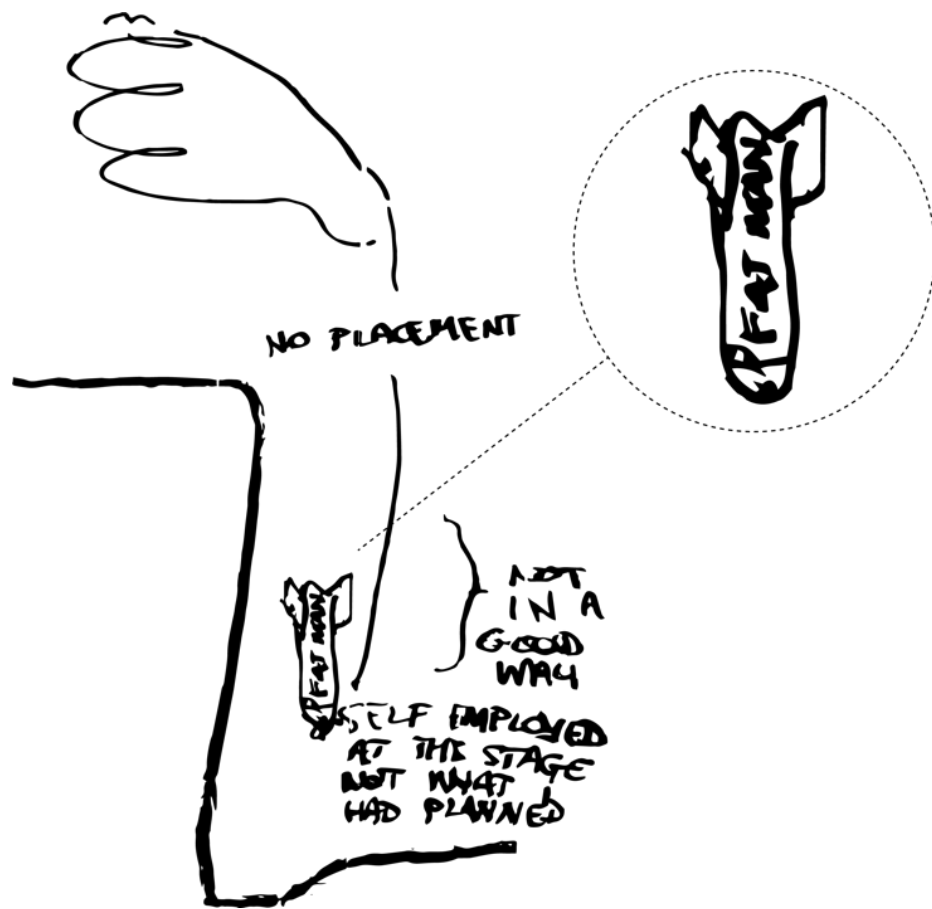


Figure 24 Education as Unstable Terrain with Fat Man Bomb (Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 02)

Motivations Outcome Space

This outcome space categorises respondents' experience of the motivations behind his, her, others', or society's endeavours.

Table 3 – Motivations Referential Overview – after Maslow (1943)

	motivation as oriented towards...
self-actualization	developing an internalized centring/ anchoring/ grounding. These might be conceived variously as 'higher' goals, or 'meaning' issues.
esteem	indications of success, recognition of endeavour and comparative identity issues.
social	acceptance by and resistance to others and/ or wider society. This also includes contribution and responsibilities to society and environment.
physiology & safety	basic needs such as health, food, and shelter (sometimes referred to as being able to 'live').

Though it wasn't asked, one might imagine these conceptions as responses to the question: "why are you doing these things?". It is natural that the respondents' external horizons within these categories are limited to trajectories of *Profession* and *Wider-life*. Given that the categories of description co-opt much of Maslow's (1943 pp. 372-382) *Theory of Human Motivations* nomenclature, one might expect me to turn to the commonly-related graphic depiction of Maslow's theory – the pyramid – as basis of my relationships. That pyramid, however, forms no traceable part of Maslow's own exposition (Maslow, 1943; Maslow, 1970), nevertheless having been adopted as the normative graphic telling of the theory. This infers relative stabilities of pyramid structures (each 'layer' built upon the foundation of the previous), with individuals passing from phase to 'higher' phase. It is tempting to adopt the familiar metaphor, but my respondents do not bare out that conception – for instance, respondents indicating that their social and self-actualization motivations are *compromised* by physiology and safety motivations (rather than *founded* on them). The problem is partially that the pyramid makes explicit relationships only to each position's 'prior' and 'next' positions – even though each position is elucidatory. So, I propose the structural relationships between the motivations categories as a metaphorical quadrophonic soundscape created by four audio sources broadcasting

simultaneously, outlined by Figure 25. There is natural ‘wave interference’ between positions/ categories. Some confluence points are constructive and reinforcing, and others destructive and detracting.

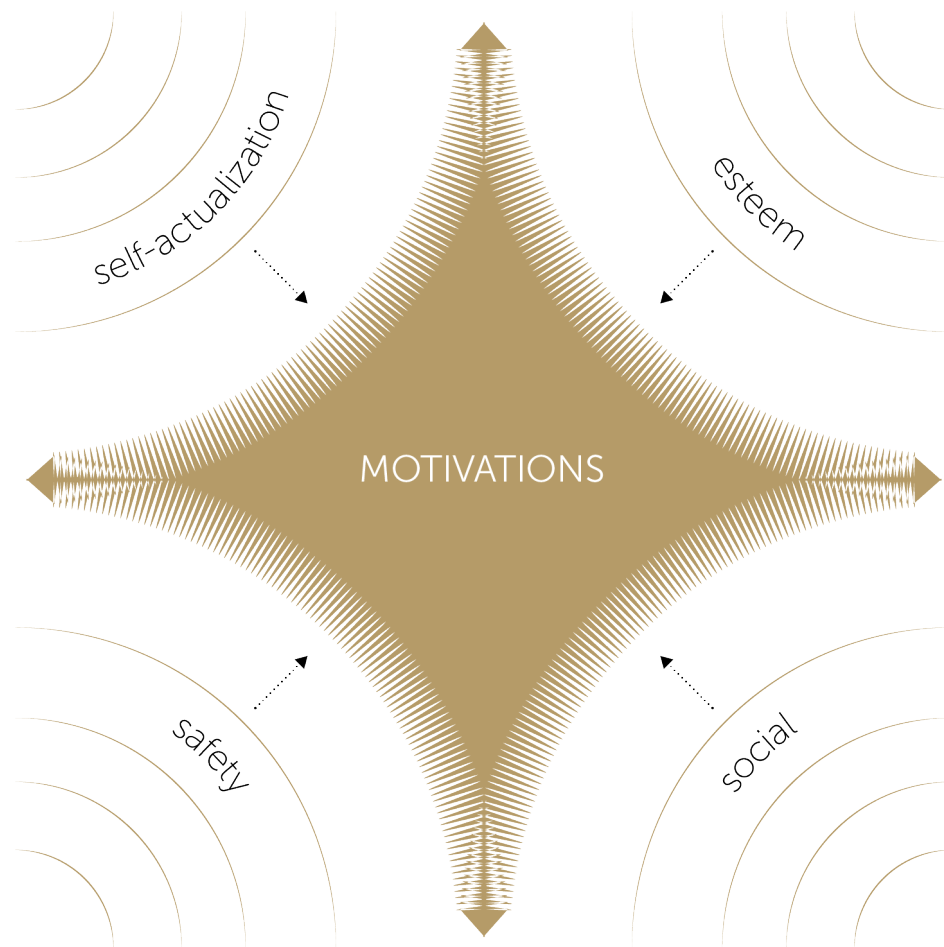


Figure 25 – Motivations Structural Overview as Quadrophonic Soundscape

Self-Actualization

The Self-Actualization category of description summarises conceptions of motivation as oriented towards:

developing an internalized centring/ anchoring/ grounding. These might be conceived variously as ‘higher’ goals, or ‘meaning’ issues. (Table 3)

In this context, these conceptions can indicate aspirations rather than achievement. The importance of this category of conceptions is not that it deals exclusively with higher-plane existence or grand designs (as might be inferred by its grandiose title), but that the respondent indicates conceptions around ‘anchoring’ or ‘knowing

oneself' – even if the subject of that awareness may appear hum-drum to others.

The following extract demonstrates this perfectly, with talk of a self-imposed: “wall” whilst maintaining that: “It’s a good wall!” (limiting projections into the future):

[14:09.5] I try not to plan too much, you know? I would... however, like a cat in the future [laughing]... it's not a bad brick wall, but it is a brick wall... I'd really like to live by the sea... it's home for me. I'm going to draw like little hills... I'll just draw a sun as well... to show it's not darkness behind the brick wall... Yeah, it's my wall. It's a good wall! [17:05.0] I'm quite happy with my lot at the moment, you know... it's good [but] I'll put something to make it more realistic. I'll put a cloud in there as well. [laughing] Just a little white one, yeah, just to dampen my parade! (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 05B*)



Figure 26 – Wider-life as Hills & Sea (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 05*)

Her humour acknowledges that some may infer a lack of stretch in the apparent modesty of ambition, but her wider explanations indicate that she has developed a

Baumesque* conception of 'home' as key to *her*. She unpacks this further, this time turning to the higher theme of 'creativity':

[29:34.7] it's really important for me to be in a place that I like, for my own wellbeing, not just kind of personally, but creativity-wise. I think it's easier to... be happy if you're in a place you like... My partner has... other dreams as well that you have got to tie together... but we both do want to go back to [home] eventually. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 05A*)

Significantly, exclusively amongst my student respondents, she acknowledges that she has a life-partner who *also* has ambitions ("dreams") to be accommodated. This suggests that she does not simply lack ambition, but that her conceptions come from profound consideration.

Esteem

The Esteem category of description summarises conceptions of motivation as oriented towards:

indications of success, recognition of endeavour and comparative identity issues. (Table 3)

This category of conception is concurrent– and often espoused as in tension – with other categories. The following offers typical positioning:

[13:03.2] I see several things... this white picket fence and... the house. A London townhouse, maybe... bought... if you've made it in life, why not buy?... If you buy a property in London it's going to be [making exploding noise] ... so I'll put a little pound [symbol]. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 01*)

Immediately afterwards, the respondent goes on to clarify:

... maybe a family?... I probably won't have children of my own... I'll have my sister's children... in my life quite a lot... Maybe marriage to another guy... I think everything else is kind of materialistic... I think I would like to have had my own [children] but... in the gay world it's kind of a lot harder... (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 01*)

* L. Frank Baum, author of 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz' in which the protagonist, through exciting expedition realises what she desires: "there's no place like home".



Figure 27 – Wider-life as Life Memories (Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 01)

Esteem, then, is sometimes acknowledged by respondents, but tends to subsequently be critiqued by respondents as partial/ superficial. For example, verbal and graphic extract from the above respondent ranges widely through categories of motivation:

The material things, yeah, they're great [but] if my house went up in flames... the first thing I'd always worry about is... documentation... so I'm still alive according to the government... Yeah, I want things. I'm human... [17:15.1] But... the camera... memories... I think that's one thing I always try to create... [20:32.2] And... life and death... meaning that I'd want to do everything before I did ever go and hopefully I wasn't a massive [unclear] to everyone. ... (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 01*)

Social

The Social category of description summarises conceptions of motivation as oriented towards:

acceptance by and resistance to others and/ or wider society. This also includes contribution and responsibilities to society and environment. (Table 3)

Societal contribution and obligations could be argued as 'above' self-actualisation in contemporary society where 'social' might be thought somewhat synonymous with self-broadcast, but I use 'social' to indicate concerns with meaningful relationships *for the respondent*. The extract below demonstrates the need for belonging and being appreciated by others, with even mortality not providing terminal judgement for this respondent:

[15:05.3] If you don't... gain something in your life, it's still adding towards... society in general and social constructs and how the world's created. So you're still happy with that... no matter how trivial or how strong or important it was... I don't know where I'm going, to be honest with you... [but]... no matter what the contribution is, somebody's going to find your contribution. Somebody's going to consider it, somebody's going to take something from it at some stage. It would be nice if it happened before you died. It would be nice if it was a positive contribution you'd made. But it is going to be a contribution... (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 02*)

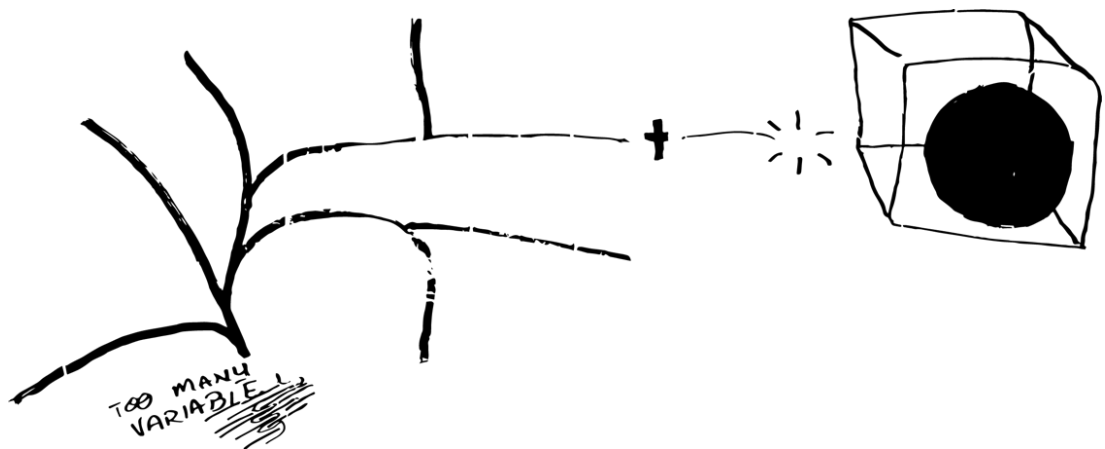


Figure 28 – Wider-life as Variable Paths (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 02*)

The graphic extract indicates that this respondent feels that there are “too many variables” on which to predict future direction, and there is a sense that his conceptions of motivations related to society (love, belonging and contribution) provides a comfort in that uncertainty. The respondent rather touchingly introduces, too, the tension between this category of motivations and others:

[21:19.3] You don't need to keep on and keep on and keep on pushing and chopping and changing... Jumping into a different area because you think that

it's going to be better for you... That's even social... relationships... where you live... how you live... You could keep on, and keep on, but you have to recognise when you've got enough. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 02*)

Physiology & Safety

The Physiology & Safety category of description summarises conceptions of motivation as oriented towards:

basic needs such as health, food, and shelter (sometimes referred to as being able to 'live'). (Table 3)

The following extract exemplifies motivations around physiology and safety in terms of the elusive “happiness” – even accounting for the reason for owning, rather than renting, accommodation:

[13:03.5] I used to want to have a long life. But now I just kind of want to have a happy life. Hopefully, you know, happiness is in my future... Being able to put my feet up and relax. And still have the time to be... working on things I like... Food in my belly. A roof over my head. Pretty much set. I'd like to say that I'm happy with [not owning the roof] as long as I'm under it and I'm happy... [But] I'd want to feel the satisfaction at that point. I've accomplished something... and I get the reward for that... my own house... wouldn't be falling apart [and would be] heated and warm. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 06*)

Figure 29 epitomises this essence of basic, simple satiation, whilst the verbal extract elaborates that this represents another example of different conceptions of experience being held simultaneous, and entirely confluent – yes, the “roof” will provide basic needs, but it will also provide esteem: “I'd want to feel the satisfaction... and... reward.”

This section has elaborated the referential and structural aspects of the *Motivations Outcome Space*, with supporting examples from respondent verbal and graphic artefacts. The gestalt of the outcome space is considered in conclusions.



Figure 29 – Wider-life as Roof & Feet (Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 06)

Balances Outcome Space

This outcome space categorises experience of the balances of life (and potential compromises) conceived by respondents.

Table 4 – Balances Referential Overview

	balance as relating to...
wider	the importance of wider life, maintenance of personal values, or important personal desires.
equal	parity between wider life and profession.
travel	the value of travel and its qualities.
profession	primary focus on profession, or professional matters overwhelming/ overriding wider matters.

Like the Motivations Outcome Space, respondents' external horizons are exclusively *Profession* and *Wider-life*, because this outcome space represents the emergence of conceptions indicating a 'see-saw' balance between the two, with equal balance formed from uniform weighting. Travel has a relationship, in particular, with both extremes in being conceived as to some extent 'righting the balance'. In Figure 30, a profession bias is indicated by the relative size of that element compared to the wider-life element, but the balance is ameliorated in this example by travel.

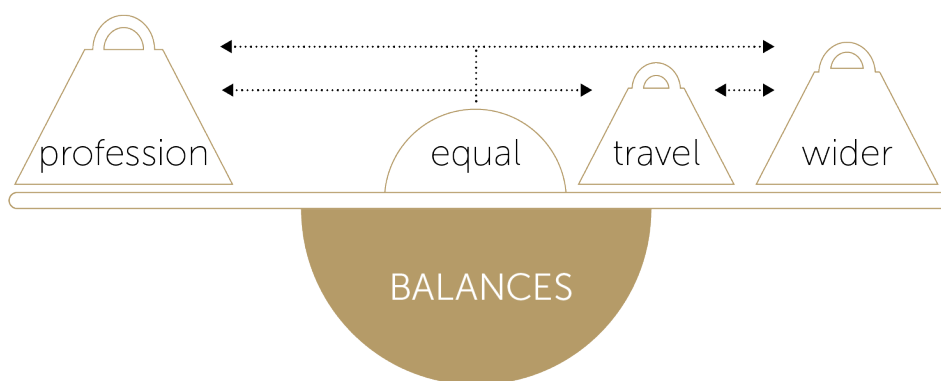


Figure 30 – Balances Structural Overview as Scale

Wider

The Wider category of description summarises conceptions of balance as relating to:

the importance of wider life, maintenance of personal values, or important personal desires. (Table 4)

Personal values include ethical concerns and impact on others, whilst personal desires extend to matters such as where the respondent wishes to live. In our respondents' contexts, gravitation towards this pole frequently relates to notions of 'creative freedom'. The following extract illustrates this:

[29:35.7] I always said... I would sleep on a day mattress in an alleyway... as long as I could keep drawing... so it's... the constant divide between surviving, making one happy, buying a Ferrari... or [making]... good work... [If] I'm stuck in an alleyway... making good work... it'll be good work to me... but nobody else is going to see it. So it's like a struggle between... getting recognition by other people for the good things that you do and not letting the good, timeless things go to waste. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 06*)

So, this conception acknowledges its utopian longing and creative paradox – that the work may exist, but it may equally never be viewed. And, in doing so it, introduces the next category of description – particularly in its accompanying graphic extract:

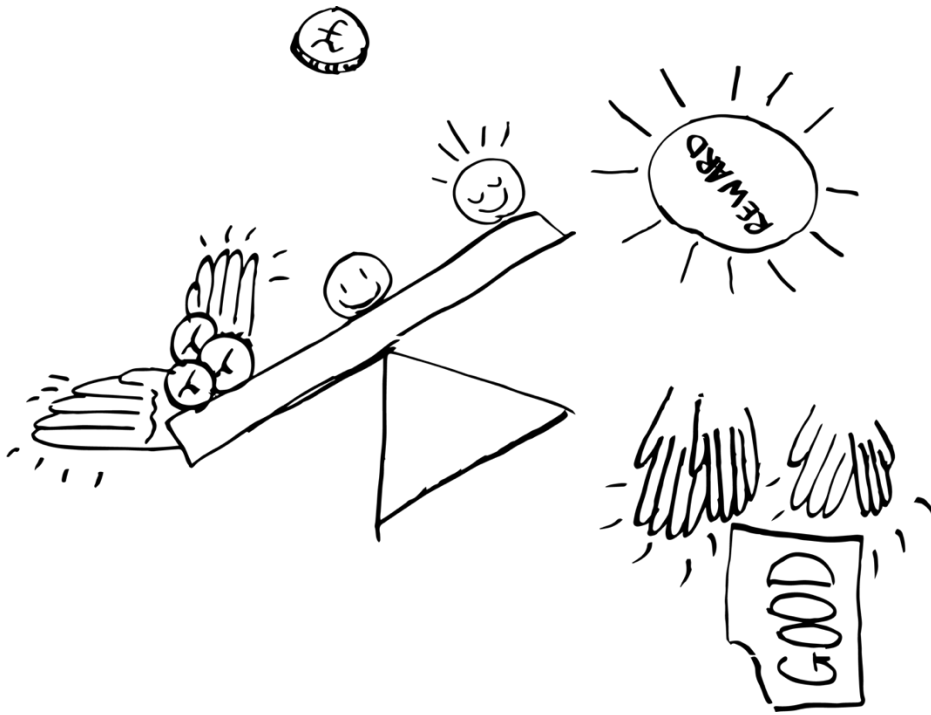


Figure 31 – Profession as Rewards Seesaw (Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 06)

The graphic and verbal extracts are ultimately ambiguous, since the ‘beaming face’ is counter-balanced by the acknowledgement of monetary and acclamatory rewards:

[35:02.3] You need the two. But you have to find the right balance. The sun is like... a reward... even if there are clouds... It's not a physical sun: it's like a positive mental attitude... From... making the good work... you get... mental clarity... basking in the warmth of that clarity. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 06*)

However, the final words appear to tip the balance towards wider concerns, in advocating “mental clarity” where “good work” transcends. For this respondent, that is more important.

Equal

The Equal category of description summarises conceptions of balance as relating to:

parity between wider life and profession. (Table 4)

There may be dissonance between intent and actuality as respondents can lack evidence of previous experience operating within this equally-balanced mode. This

striving for equal balance is exemplified by the following extract, in which the tension of attaining and maintaining such equity is emphatic:

[18:23.8] I like... the idea of the lifestyle I could have... but would I want to be in an office all day, every day?... Whilst graphics is kind of who I want to be professionally... I like making things and doing stuff... [not] to do with work... The idea of not having time to... really, really scares me. [21:07.2] Whilst I think graphics is a big part of who I am... I don't see work as my entire life... I have other things that... are important to me as well... I'll call it Time, Design and Matter... This is the rest of my life and this is design... It's kind of an equal thing... [29:34.7] It is scaring me. I'm very nervous... [so] I'm going to call this 'the line of nerve'! (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 05A*)

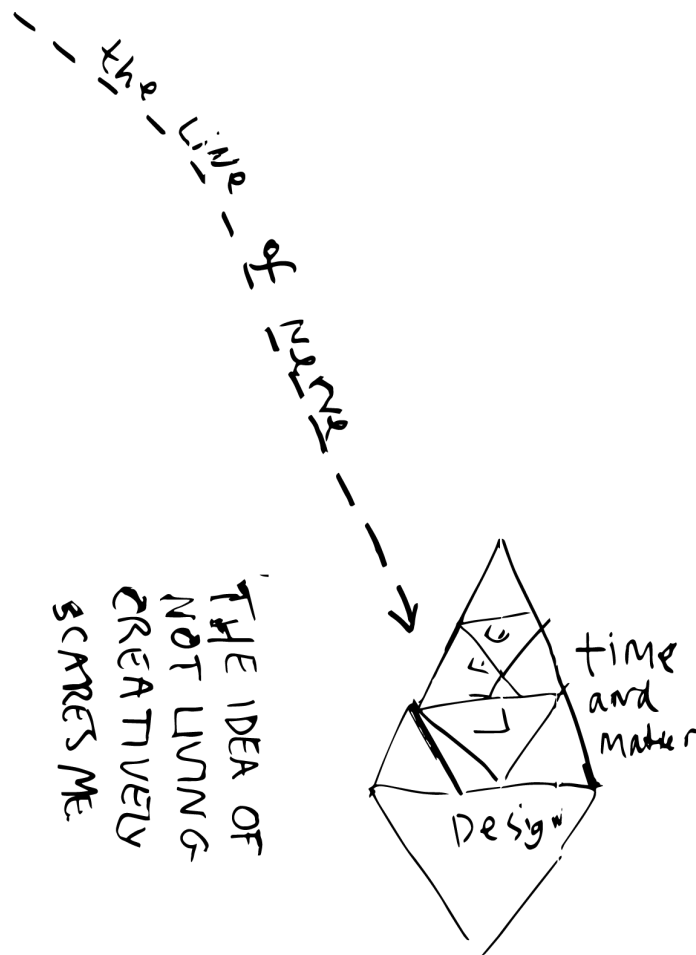


Figure 32 – Profession as Crystal Nerve (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 05A*)

Travel

The Travel category of description summarises conceptions of balance as relating to:

the value of travel and its qualities. (Table 4)

Travel may be positioned as offering a counter to whichever life-balance the respondent has otherwise indicated, so has somewhat complex relationships with the other categories – with many advantages conceived of taking oneself elsewhere. Its complexity lies in that whilst it emerged dominantly during probing about *wider-life*, it is offered as a mollifying factor to *profession*. All three of the following respondents propose significant virtues for travel, and all conceive profession of prime importance. The first even uses travel as over-arching the whole of life, with this response to wider-life concerns:

It's... travel. I've never really stayed put in one place... So it's definitely... another destination. I don't know spiritually if... religion [is] playing a part [but] it's definitely like a fascination of the world. So it's... learning... movement... following the 'why'. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 09*)

Travel appears as antidote for profession in the following graphic extract, alongside a (bought) house and family. It indicates family travel as a “break from job”:

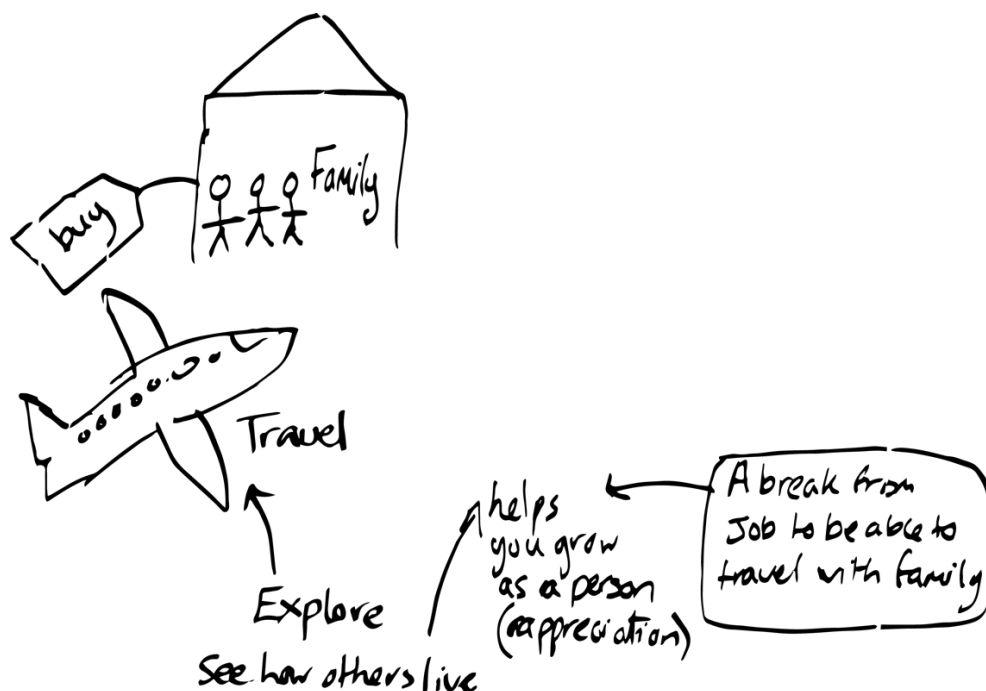


Figure 33 – Wider-life as Travel & House (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 10*)

The final example extols significant benefits of travel as partial proxy for wider-life:

[07:45.9] I want to travel more. I just saw an advert in a design magazine that said, 'Travel before it's not fun anymore' and it's just pictures of people... old

age... So I definitely want to travel more [for] life experience. Connections. Just you learn so much more, I think, travelling than staying in one place... You come across new people, cultures, new sort of ways of thinking and living. They're just invaluable... that's learning. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 07*)

There is a powerful sense here of temporality – the clock is ticking and “old age” travel is not “fun”. This sense of clock-ticking surfaces alongside other indications that profession must come first – or above all.

Profession

The Profession category of description summarises conceptions of balance as relating to:

primary focus on profession, or professional matters overwhelming/ overriding wider matters. (Table 4)

These balance is sometimes offered as a choice, but also as pragmatic compromise. As stated above, professional emphasis often uses travel within wider-life as a counter-balance, and the respondent who was concerned about travel in “old age” is also concerned about accommodating profession – “to have achieved” – earlier in life:

[09:19.3] In terms of, like starting family? Probably not until I'm at least 30. Just because... in my 20s I'll be building up to that... rather than trying to have a family... trying to build the foundations of something. Especially something as big as that. You really need to know what you want to have achieved by then, or what you feel you need to have done by then, in order to prepare... so many pieces that still need to be put in place. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 07*)

Travel's benefits and “30” as significant threshold for balance in favour of profession similarly predominate the graphic extract of the respondent's wider life:

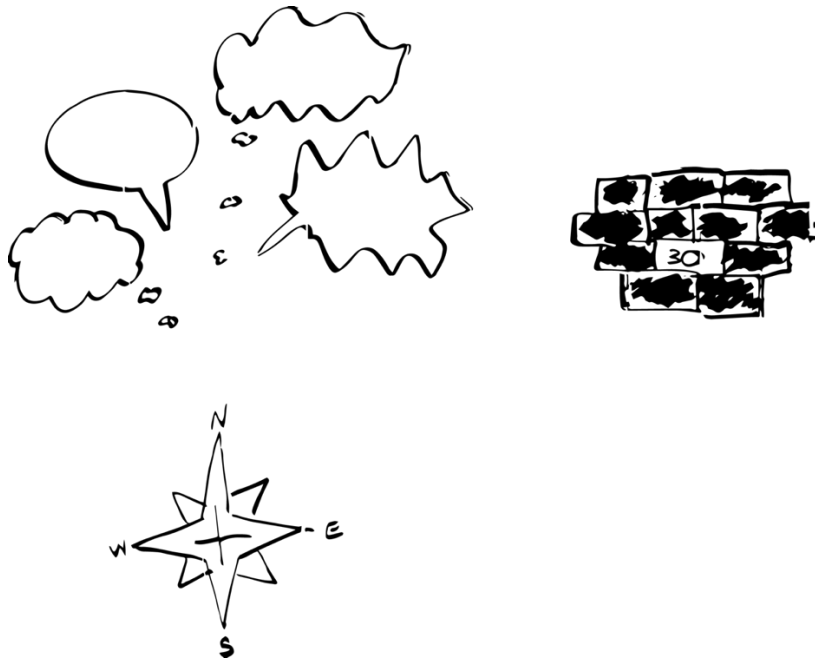


Figure 34 – Wider-life as Compass Rose (Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 07)

Such an age-related threshold was unique amongst respondents. It is, perhaps, unsurprising that for final-year undergraduates, profession may loom large. Another respondent juxtaposes the immediate with the distant, inferring that profession settles enough later to switch to cultivation of wider-life:

[11:17.2] I think [the wider] side of my... life is... not there. It's not visible... a cloud [but]... there's a space between the clouds. [34:48.6] The clouds are like the life outside your professional career. It's like a cloud because I don't spend time thinking about it so much. 'Cause... I don't have... other specific goals at the moment... beside... stepping into a career. I want to get through this stage, then... I might start looking [wider]. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 08*)



Figure 35 – Wider-life as Cloud Bank (Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 08)

But there is caution inherent in the balance towards profession to the exclusion of wider-life, since the inference is that the indeterminateness of wider-life self-rights spontaneously. This seems reasonable where founded in pragmatic ‘holding-off’ until temporary uncertainties of earning (such as locations of work) are clearer:

[16:37.1] I focus so much on who I know in the industry... the professional side of my life is so important. In terms of the social aspect... in a year's time I don't know where I'll be working. Probably not in [this city]... And there's never really been any definition in terms of kind of... the personal side of my life. Because it's much more unpredictable. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 11*)

But that evolution may not necessarily follow if the conception is based on far deeper concerns about capacities to deal with uncertainty, as indicated at the end of the previous quote; or to deal with other people, or fear of the affects that permitting oneself a wider personal life may have on one's professional performance:

[18:07.5] In terms of who you need and who you lose contact with, who you fall out with... it's kind of strange for me in my own head because I have such a fixed idea... of where I'm going... yet this is so confused... just a kind of mush... When you start to get... confidence in where you're going... this becomes less hazy and a bit more linear. But... it's always... not going to have that definition that the professional line's got... It starts to become tricky... when your professional life starts to kind of rupture a little bit and... you can't

sort of focus on anything and everything kind of becomes intertwined... In terms of the future... I don't have any plans. I don't know if I'll settle down with anyone. If we'll have kids. There's no definition. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 11*)

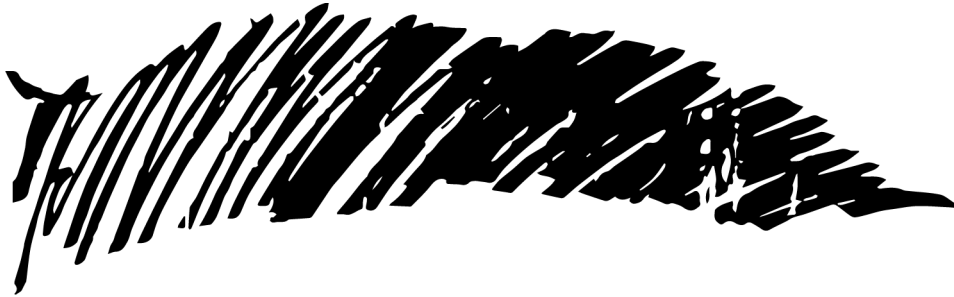


Figure 36 – Wider-life as Mush (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Wider 11*)

This conceives of favouring profession over wider-life because the former is more defined, but without accounting for how wider-life subsequently becomes more defined. It is hoped that this does not represent a zero-sum strategy towards wider-life. The referential and structural aspects of the categories of the *Balances Outcome Space* have been elaborated in this section, with supporting examples from respondent verbal and graphic artefacts. The meaning of the whole outcome space is considered in conclusions.

Efficacies Outcome Space

This outcome space categorises conceptions of respondents' experiences that delineate efficacy beliefs or relative agency, and is derived from the broadest range of responses – extending to three of four external horizons (*Education, Profession* and *Wider-life*).

Table 5 – Efficacies Referential Overview – *Loosely after Tuckman (1965)*

	efficacy as...
performing	clear trajectories or postulations about positive intentions. These statements are often based on development of respondents' own efficacy beliefs, thus portraying a personal apogee.
contemplating	an internalised sense of agency and self-efficacy, tending towards positioning the actor as 'OK' (despite potential or experienced external challenges and occurrences).
forming	formation of a sense of self-agency through external indications and experiences, frequently crediting others with potential influence over such formation of self-efficacy.
storming	responses or determinations to matters that the respondent has perceived as unsatisfactory and within their influence, against which they have resisted or resolve to resist.
externalised	impaired by perception of lack of influence or control, to which respondents describe a fear of no coping strategy or capitulation.

I developed the nomenclature of the *Efficacies Outcome Space* categories with loose reference to Tuckman's (1965) sequence of the development of small groups, because the underlying conceptions within these categories are largely situated in contemplation of interaction outside one's self – with others. The relationships emerged as two poles of efficacy, which I visualise as at opposite ends of the outer band of a rainbow (since both are outwards-facing in different ways). The former *externalised* represents agency *given* to the external whilst the latter *performing* represents an internalised self-agency to *affect* the external. There is little relationship between the two conceptually except through the sequential categories of conceptions of the inner band. *Performing* represents the idiomatic 'gold at the end of the rainbow,' so producing a compelling practical one-way relationship (consequence) from *performing* to *externalised*. The former yields potency, and so undermines the negative grip of the latter, with the potential for a virtuous cycle. The intervening 'inner' conceptions represent a sequence of: *storming* (contestation of

externalised control); through *forming* (the formation of efficacy through positive externalised factors such a feedback) to *contemplating* (being at the threshold of self-efficacy through internalized belief – but not yet conceiving any detailed action).

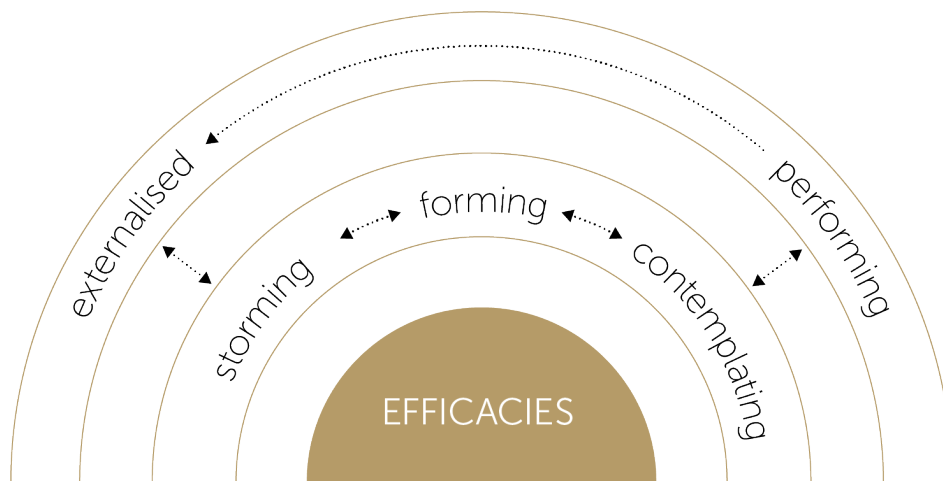


Figure 37 – Efficacies Structural Overview as Rainbow

Performing

The *Performing* category of description summarises conceptions of efficacy as:

clear trajectories or postulations about positive intentions. These statements are often based on development of respondents' own efficacy beliefs, thus portraying a personal apogee. (Table 5)

These assertions may lack evidence base and/or be naïve, but action is implicit – a looking forward. This respondent illustrates that self-internalised belief of control:

[22:15.8] There's a certain amount of control to your... professional life, because... you can control it a little bit better, I think. It's not dependent on other people quite as much. I think it depends more on yourself in your professional life. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Professional 11*)

The point is not the evidence base of source of the conception, but implicit efficacy belief. There is a sense of 'I will', but often with an inferred or explicit contrast to self-efficacies in wider-life, as expressed also by this respondent:

[20:26.3] Nobody can judge how [wider life is] going to go. You know? It's just part of life. This to me, the professionalism, if I work hard and keep at it, that is logical and if I get the breaks and I make the breaks, that can be achieved. That can be a logical step. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Professional 04A*)

It differs from *Contemplating* by its palpable sense of imminent possibility – of cause and effect – with consequent remarkable detailing of action or scenarios – as indicated in this extract:

[16:58.5] Well one day I'd like to set up my own studio. But rather than sort of a multi-discipline studio, ours will offer sort of somewhere for design students to stay... and work I have a vision of an open space building... sort of open plan. Two-storey with rooms to rent, equipment, letterpress sort of... print room... just a sort of studio come hub thing. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Professional 07*)

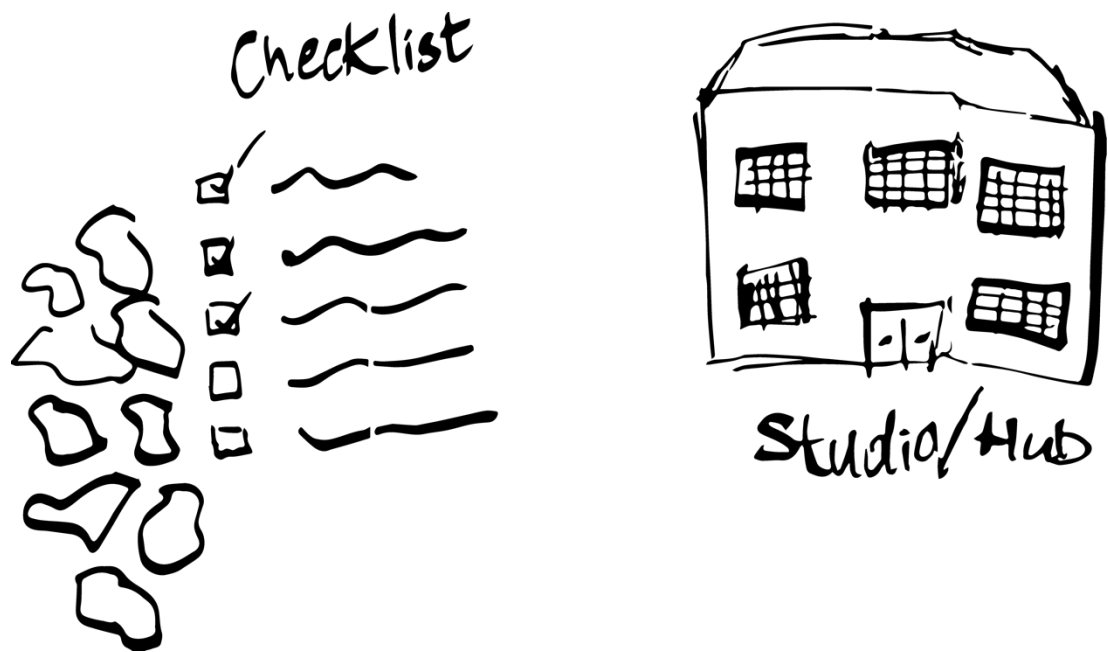


Figure 38 – Profession as Checklist & Hub (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 07*)

Contemplating

The *Contemplating* category of description summarises conceptions of efficacy as:

an internalised sense of agency and self-efficacy, tending towards positioning the actor as 'OK' (despite potential or experienced external challenges and occurrences). (Table 5)

An internalised sense of the possible is being indicated, often demonstrating a qualified contemplation of action. This category has a sense of internalised assertion of one's own value, but not yet translated to specific resolution or action. Whereas the *Performing* category inferred 'I will', this *Contemplation* category has more of a sense of 'I can'. The important step is that the individual, whilst still being open to

feedback cycles, recognises their own innate worth. The extract below demonstrates that the respondent has reached this conclusion:

[15:45.7] Highlights... when you've had some real challenges... and you produce it well, and you feel like giving yourself a pat on the back... It's when you get the idea and you see it through... and you're happy with it, too, is the most important thing. 'Cause feedback's all very well but if you're happy with it, it's the best feeling that you've actually produced something really good that you would even put in your own house, but you don't because it would be ostentatious! (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 04*)

This conception emerges too in an aspiration rather than current reality (so is also represented by the next *Forming* category), as with this respondent:

[30:28.6] I always get really excited by things when they inspire me. But I think my work, like, I do get excited by it, but not enough to... be proud... Powering through, and not quitting because something or someone put you down... it looks to me like putting a tattoo with me on it, so... standing by it... Being proud of me. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 03*)

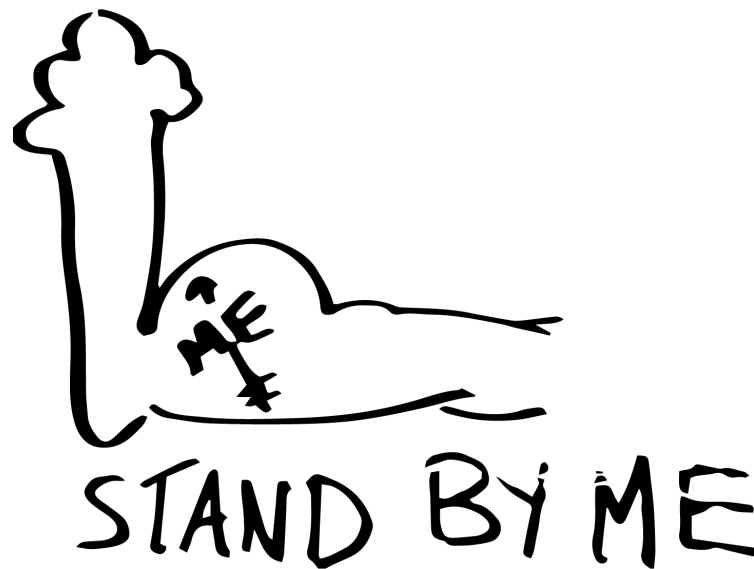


Figure 39 – Profession as Creative Community (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 03*)

Forming

The Forming category of description summarises conceptions of efficacy as:

formation of a sense of self-agency through external indications and experiences, frequently crediting others with potential influence over such formation of self-efficacy. (Table 5)

An externalised sense of the possible is indicated, often in relation to what has gone before. The previous illustrative extract partially indicated this category by aspiring, rather than having reached, *Contemplation*. The emphasis of this *Forming* category of conceptions is towards external indications of effectiveness, and indications of how others have influenced formation of identity/ direction. For instance, this respondent describes how another's perspective positively influenced his own:

[02:16.8] I had to stop doing art for a year. Instead I did photography... And it was in that year that I found out what graphic design was... and my photography teacher said, 'Maybe you should do that.' And that was, like, the final piece, I guess, for me, in my head. And now I'm, I'm standing at the top of the mountain. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 06*)

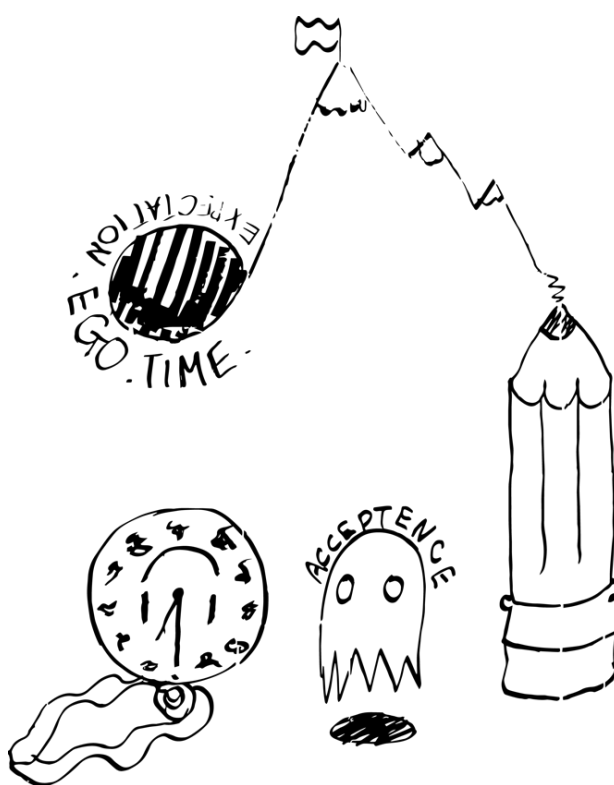


Figure 40 – Education as Pencil Peaks (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 06*)

That respondent, however, goes on to elaborate the consequence of having doubts about the next phase of efficacy-belief through the flip-side of his mountain analogy:

[07:01.1] There's the constant tension to fall off... if I don't make the best of [education] then it'll be that big black hole. And I'll regret everything so far. [Expectation] from yourself, maybe: the ego is involved there. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 06*)

Storming

The Storming category of description summarises conceptions of efficacy as:

responses or determinations to matters that the respondent has perceived as unsatisfactory and within their influence, against which they have resisted or resolve to resist. (Table 5)

An externalised sense of the possible is indicated, often in relation to what has gone before. Unlike the *Externalised* category below, where the inference is an abdication of further action, this *Storming* category describes a dissatisfaction or contestation backed by resolve or action. This extract illustrates discord about the respondent's conceptions of industry:

[16:25.4] I don't really see it as a positive thing, what's going on... 'How can we use you... to make us better?'... I want [something] ...more permanent. Maybe it's a [metaphorical] house... something that stays put, rather than just meanders along... [something] sustainable. Yeah, I want to... be a little column... build something, like, in my career, instead of... do... other people's thoughts... Yeah, I wanna... not worry about... [the] clock... that's always, like, the worry... pressure. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 09A*)

The important aspect of this category is that action or resolve emerges as a result of dissatisfaction, albeit that the resolve or action can appear underdeveloped. This is not a critique of the critical evaluative capacities of the respondent (on the contrary – strong critical evaluation skills may be present), but rather a reverberation of the more negative-oriented *Storming* position of efficacy versus the more positive contexts of the *Performing* category. This is demonstrated when the respondent above goes on to elaborate:

[24:09.4] I think my future seems to be in something else... trying to find... purpose to do something... [not] going to the first placement and then the first thing and then working for a year or two or something, take a year out, realising you don't want to do it and then going to another industry, da, da, da. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 09A*)

This appears negative, but elsewhere the respondent demonstrates the level of deep-thinking that has been provoked. The lesser-conceived immediate reaction (such as that above) may be a natural defensive proxy until a more considered resolution or direction emerges from further contemplation:

[05:07.0] I guess the challenge is myself. It's... challenging the way I work; it's... other people... challenging the way you work. Maybe feeling a bit boxed-in... The purpose of the course in the first place puts the box around what I want to do... the imposed purpose. Like this box is made for you because you're a graphic designer... [but] over time... I've made myself question why this box is here... [10:51.9] It's set out as a challenge worth achieving [but]... I don't see what that achieves. Apart from more money. But graphics can be... beautiful as well... you can't escape the image. (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Profession 09B*)



Figure 41 – Education as Unveiled Eye (*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 09*)

Externalised

The Externalised category of description summarises conceptions of efficacy as:

impaired by perception of lack of influence or control, to which respondents describe a fear of no coping strategy or capitulation. (Table 5)

Action is often abdicated (sometimes this might imply acceptance, but also may indicate an exhaustion, or simple refusal, to explore). Dead-end is implicit. I must

emphasise, again, that this is not a critical stance of the respondent and/or his or her conception, nor of the institute, but simply a description of nett effect. The following graphic extract exemplifies this reported lack of influence or control over circumstances, and the consequential impact (“lost in institution”):

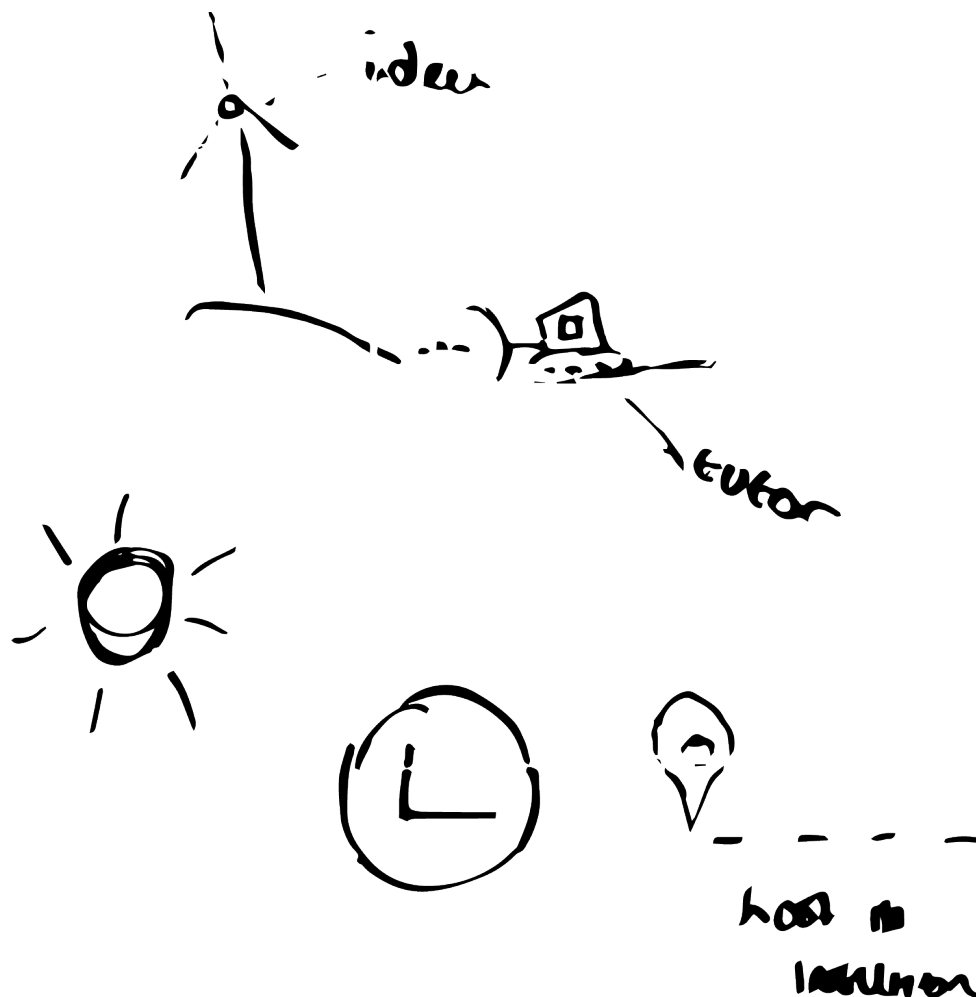


Figure 42 – Education as Lost Desert (Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 01)

The positive normative symbolic associations of some of the imagery is dispelled by the respondent’s verbal elaboration:

[01:23.2] It feels like this is going on forever. Education appears to be taking forever, sweltering away for an eternity ... [07:02.2] This fog over there... a map... with no direction... a bit of being lost in an institution... I just don't enjoy it... the institution itself and the university... I never feel like we're ever doing anything worthwhile. [09:19.0] And every idea, unless it was really conceptual and it was so ground-breaking, it was kind of knocked back by the tutor... We don't have the resources, we don't exactly have labs downstairs to go and turn

plastic into gold, so what are we supposed to do... If the tutor didn't like it (or tutors) then it wouldn't have gone through... like [a] bulldozer... [of my] ideas.
(*Life Drawing Praxis – Extracts – Education 01*)

This is indicative of this category of common conception amongst respondents. It has no accompanying 'way forward' or statement of resolution. The conception may find its way to the National Student Survey, but lacks immediate productivity. This must be seen in the context of the elicitation sessions, where respondents were invited to provide less-inhibited graphic representations of their experience – and may be indicative of drawing's emotive fluency for these specific participants. Whatever the roots, it is clear that the circumstances leading to the development of this category of conceptions are not desirable for prospective practitioners, nor for educators, institutions and employers.

This culminates the elaboration of the referential and structural aspects of all 28 categories of description, with supporting verbal and graphic examples. The following conclusions return to the significance of each outcome space as a whole later.

Conclusions

My research practice was centred around an inquisitive triptych, with concurrent concerns about:

- Employability: *final-year graphic design undergraduates' experiences of being subject to the phenomenon of employability;*
- Graphic Elicitation: *the utility and fruitfulness of graphic elicitation as inquisitive graphic practice;*
- Phenomenography: *the productivity of phenomenography as an approach towards collecting and analysing qualitative data.*

I will discuss each of these components in turn, and co-opt Richard Guyatt's 1948 mantra for the Royal College of Art, as he formed the RCA School of Graphic Design: "Head, Heart and Hand" (Guyatt, 1976). I propose *Employability* as the *Heart* of this triptych – it is the core phenomenon of which we are seeking respondents' ways of experiencing. The *Hand* represents the practice of *Graphic Elicitation* – the graphic artefacts and the verbal conversations inspired by them are the consequent traces. The cool *Head* is *Phenomenography*, (albeit requiring in operation a great deal of hand-work too) – the place where the referential meaning and intents were probed to form my thematic structural hierarchies and relationships.

Heart – Employability

I proposed earlier that what my practice has revealed about the subject phenomenon – the range of ways of experiencing employability – is an indication of my productiveness, or lack of it, with both graphic elicitation and phenomenography. And yet it is necessary to be mindful that phenomenography:

...does not seek to formulate general principles about how things appear. The ultimate goal is to describe the qualitatively different ways a group of people make sense of, experience, and understand phenomena in the world around them. (A. Barnard et al., 1999 pp. 223-224)

In other words, phenomenography's intent is limited to the respondent group (in this case, final-year graphic design undergraduates), with the aspiration that within a diverse sampling of that group there will emerge specific ways of experiencing the phenomenon (in this case, employability). It is within that qualification that I comment on what emerged about employability for final-year graphic design

undergraduates at eight art and design institutions across the United Kingdom. That geopolitical entity – the UK – is significant, because since the artefacts were produced, there has been a momentous and contentious referendum decision that all the territories of the UK shall leave the European Union. At time of writing, the practical consequences of this are only beginning to emerge, but it is safe to conclude that it will at least partially (and potentially significantly) impact experiences of employability. The Bologna Process Secretariat (2017) emphasise a major area of concern for UK higher education institutions and students on its homepage:

The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is the result of the political will of 48 countries which, step by step during the last eighteen years, built an area using common tools... For all these countries, the main goal is to increase staff and students' mobility and to facilitate employability. (The Bologna Process Secretariat, 2017)

Freedom of movement to gain employment and live in any of the countries of the European Union is likely to be curtailed for the members of the respondent group who reside in the UK; and those from outside the UK may be invited to leave. Though it may seem curious to any future reader of this document, there is only speculation at this stage (June 2017) about the effects of the decision for the UK to leave the EU. So, whilst acknowledging that it clearly impacts the phenomenon under investigation for the respondent group, there is little else to be gained from speculating about the extent of its impact.

THE CONTRIBUTION of this current analysis of the research data has confirmed that final-year graphic design undergraduates have a wide range of conceptions around the dimensions of employability discussed – they do not agree. The envisaged culmination of this phenomenographic analysis was an elegant, simple, single outcome space that would ‘tell the whole story’. However, the key dual requirements of a phenomenographic outcome space are that it should both describe each category referentially, but additionally that each category should have a defined structural relationship with the others. I adopted a wide gamut of employability, so found it unfeasible to form one single outcome space. I was initially able to reduce existing discourses of employability to four domains (industry, profession, education and wider-life) – but no fewer – and, in retrospect, that was an early omen. In my

own exploration of employability that formed an embryonic part of my practice, there was an implicit critique that so broad was employability, that its viability as a single construct may be illusory. And yet employability transparently does exist – at least in discourse – albeit contested in various ways. So, it seems fruitless to propose that the term is devoid of purpose solely by its breadth, but more productive rather to proffer boundaries and clarifications for its use. A prime purpose of my research was to supplement the gap in discourses of employability of current students' perspectives, and so it was incumbent upon me to ask *around* the subject rather than using the dominant terminologies and perspectives that might overshadow and obscure what they had to say. In that sense, my approach was a more oblique rendering of phenomenography – the danger being that consequently I:

... may have obtained superficial data that only capture the individuals' general opinions about the object under investigation, rather than their more fundamental conceptions of it. (Sandbergh, 1997 p. 206)

I argue conversely, that the necessity during my analysis to constantly reconstitute and scrutinize what was being said in terms of the ways of experiencing of the target phenomenon of employability meant that I was forced:

... to more than merely record the different ways participants talk about the phenomenon, but be able to delve behind what is said and how the particular phenomenon is understood. (Yates et al., 2012 p. 102)

The four domains offered a necessary and practical in-road, but it was, nevertheless, important during analysis to 'bracket' the original domain within which the respondent was questioned, and be open during analysis to any respondent's response being relevant to any of those domains. By doing so, the initial domains transitioned from mere structuring device to becoming the external horizons within which respondents' conceptions were situated (and importantly, *resituated* by respondents).

And yet, the resistance of the data to form into one single outcome space of conceptions of 'employability as...' suggests that agreement on (and perhaps interest in) the precise extent and nature of employability is as elusive to my respondents as to previous commentators. I am inclined – through my research's practice and outcomes – to suggest that employability provides a pragmatic, yet ethereal, 'wrapper' or 'map'. Perhaps, for instance, for departmental titles, or for establishing

proximate province of discussion. But, in any practical exploration, implementation, or 'ground-level' working with the construct of employability, that wrapper must be opened to expose specific contents for/ by specific practitioners for a specific purpose. This is analogous for me to the boundaries of any single geographic map – a map might be called: "Ben Nevis and Glencoe", but the area it covers are formed of a multitude of factors, such as contributors' and users' 'ways of experiencing' in the physical domain its nodes and vectors, aerial photography, ground measurements, and practical concerns like the mapping scale, the size of paper, and the purpose of its use. The map is *indicative* of an area, but it is not *the* area; and ultimately, a map's boundaries are somewhat arbitrary. For a *sense* of the area itself, we look to how others and ourselves have experienced the specific places or routes of the area; and to its history and geology. Only once we resolve to visit a place within the area and have a specific wayfinding purpose in mind, does the map become tangibly useful.

This research indicates that the term employability might be viewed similarly – as the title of a map. That were any higher education institution to engage, say, final-year undergraduates in a general 'employability initiative', that not only would it be likely that each of those undergraduates had differing views on which 'places' were encompassed by employability, but they were also likely to have differing experiences of each place. On that basis, were any single understanding of employability assumed, it would be likely to exclude a wide-range of participants – failing in both accessibility and inclusion. The outcome spaces above provide one framework for clarifying the specific component of employability under scrutiny. Whilst there will be alternative dissections, in this research with final-year graphic design undergraduates the components emerged as:

- The *Grounds* of industry and profession – the nature/ character of organisations, corporations, and entities operating in any particular field, and the strategies for individual pathways within those territories;
- The *Emphases* of education, learning and instruction in preparation for and within a field (and by inference, the emphases of practice within the field);
- The *Motivations* of practitioners to operate within the field;
- The life *Balances* that might be sought by organisations and practitioners; and
- The *Efficacies* (or efficacy-beliefs) that support or undermine practitioners.

The dominant principle here is that there be a specificity to the precise domain of discourse, but equally that there is a recognition of the broad range of conceptions and positions available within each domain. The number of outcome spaces and the breadth of conceptions that has emerged within each lends weight to “discursively constituted” (Ashe, 2012 p. 133) approaches to student engagement with employability like Ashe’s (Ashe, 2012 p. 133), discussed in *The Promise of Employability* earlier.

A discussion of the contribution of each of the outcome spaces follows later in my conclusions. But discourse is open to bias – the respondents of this research demonstrated the potency of educator and institutional prompting and feedback. The undergraduate respondents demonstrated capacities to attune to those positions espoused by educators and institutions. So, discourse must develop from the individual student’s conceptions, because where there is a persistent mismatch between student and educator or student and institution, the data suggests that undergraduate efficacy beliefs might be dislodged or undermined. Discord increases the likelihood of adversarial, rather than constructive, encounter. The results of this research suggest that effectively engaging students with employability might be most productive when approached as specific negotiations around employability’s construction for the individual, rather than as standardised checklists: the student being invited to paint a canvas rather than piece together a jigsaw puzzle. This finding is verified too within my discussion of the contribution of the outcome spaces (*The Contribution of the Outcome Spaces* below).

Hand – Graphic Elicitation

The inquisitive practice that I adopted was graphic elicitation, and since there was no ‘control’ available, conclusions about what it brought beyond non-graphic elicitation would be ill-advised. It self-evidently did yield numerous graphic artefacts, and I testify to these having formed a key part of my analysis – what I have termed a ‘way in to’ large quantities of verbal text. This may be so dominant in my outputs because of my early determination not to jettison the graphic productions of graphic elicitations in favour of the verbal – and to that extent mine is not a normative graphic elicitation. My use of graphic elicitation was not as ‘visual method’ in order to access the verbal, but a practice with graphics at the heart of its questioning (e.g. “how big

is... and what size is...”), of its interrogation (e.g. “why is that boundary so thick?”), of its analysis (e.g. determination of graphic groupings) and of its exposition (e.g. tables, figures, extraction of graphic groupings to individual illustrations, and interactive interface). I can attest that it has been fruitful to me to have taken an emphatic stance on the value of the graphic, but I also appreciate better – through the extended period of several months between collection and full analysis – the corroborating power of the verbal. The graphic and verbal artefacts mutually tell the whole story, and that is why they appear side-by-side in the interactive interface, which I discuss shortly.

My concluding graphic practice resulted in the five tables and five diagrammatic figures of the outcomes spaces. Whilst graphic elicitation is not the *subject* of my phenomenographic approach, graphic elicitation’s utility can be inferred from the outcome spaces. Ashe (2012) indicated that using the epistemologies and pedagogies of a subject area may yield more productive discourses of employability, and graphic elicitation was chosen as aligning to the epistemologies and pedagogies of graphic design. Did this yield more productive discourse of employability? It is clear that graphic elicitation and graphic exposition did facilitate the telling of respondents’ ways of experiencing, so has been successful in that regard. Respondents also commented on graphic elicitation itself, usually at the conclusion of each elicitation when I asked: “how did you find that?” These comments provide some indications of its discursive efficacy. For instance, one respondent hints at drawing’s ability to articulate: “... ideas that [have]... been floating around in my head.” But there were inferences too that even graphic design students’ familiarity with the visual did not guarantee ease with drawing: “At first when you said what... what is education: draw a shape... I was, like oh... god”; supported by another respondent: “I kind of came into it... thinking like: huge Sharpie marker erm – what do I feel to this? Kind of nervous in the sense that it would be of... of no form.” This may be particular to the emerging professional designer status of my respondents – so requesting visual expression may be weighted with high expectation of graphic ability, unlike other elicitations with children. And yet, the competency of the resultant drawings attests to how quickly respondents settled to the task, as found by the respondent who reported that: “Once you start drawing then you actually thought, oh, actually, yeah... that makes me think of that.” Another elaborates this theme of

surfacing previously unclear connections through drawing: “I suddenly got on to this point of ladders between the two’ (referring to part of her sketch).” Many respondents reported similar ‘insights’: “It’s... you drawing it out, and you’re thinking: alright, this is the answer to this question. And this has prompted this.” There were even suggestions of unprompted self-realisations brought about by the qualities of respondents’ mark-making: “I’ve just noticed there’s a thick line with industry and the portfolio – so they sort of marry up.’

These words from respondents suggest that graphic elicitation *was* more productive for the research than verbal probing alone, but respondents went further than that. Some reported that the graphic elicitation had not only been productive for eliciting matters relating to the research, but that it had been productive for contemplation of his or her own future employability/ life, as suggested by Ashe (2012). For instance: “I got like a really good map of my future”; “[I got to] work out where I’m going” and: “It makes you think about like what’s next... or... what was in your past that... led to that?” Even where future insights were not specifically identified, respondents indicated that they had learned something of their own cognition: “I think it was kind of interesting for me to see just kind of how I work and how I think” and: “I think it’s quite good to recognise the thought patterns in my head, because you don’t really analyse it in that much depth.” It was this level of respondents’ ownership and identification with what emerged that clarified for me that these were not mere data, but graphic artefacts with meaning, created through dialogic probing. The respondents’ ‘self’ consequently appeared somewhat embedded within the golden blankets – as one said: “It’s like a self-portrait of my life”; and another corroborated the ‘drawing-out’ process: “It’s easier when you draw... stuff that it is not part of yourself. It’s like doing like a self-portrait.” Another hinted that the act of drawing had allowed them to express what they otherwise might not: “I find it quite hard usually to communicate emotions, but it’s really good to draw it.” Apart from the productivity for my research, using graphic elicitation has thus appeared to create encounters with final-year graphic design students that have been reciprocally-beneficial. For that, I am pleased to have used graphic elicitation. That was underlined by the respondent who reported that: “It’s quite nice to get it all down and see where you kind of come from and where you want to be.” But what did *my* form of graphic elicitation, theatricalised by the large golden blankets and over-sized marker, bring to the

encounters? The materiality of drawing surface and instrument were not lost on respondents, as evidenced by the respondent who stated that the blanket was: “so satisfying to draw on. It's the best... it's the best material ever. It's great. It's great”; and another provided validation of my choice of material: “I like this [material]. Yeah. I think if you'd have given us a massive sheet of white paper I would have been scared.” Another indicated that far from the drawing process having been a negative mediator of responses, it had perhaps provided positive mediation (though perhaps peculiar to the art and design student): “If... I'm talking anyway I'm using my hands. It's nice to have an instrument on the end of them.” So, whilst there is no ‘control’ to indicate that graphic elicitation was absolutely responsible for the rich data elicited from respondents, the combination of the qualities of the resultant artefacts, the positive ‘meta-commentary’ from my respondents, and the easy relatability of what emerged leads me to conclude that it brought something extra to the table beyond simple ‘seasoning’. And it assuredly fulfilled my goal to explore the operation and productivity of graphic elicitation as an inquisitive graphic practice. A caveat is that future research along the same basis might better anticipate the significant difficulties in the translation of highly-reflective over-sized sheets (my blankets) to the exposition medium (paper and my interface). The solution would need to respect the indications from respondents that the crudeness of the writing surface provided reassurance that a fully-resolved, intricate drawing was not required, and still permit a size that permits respondents freedom to express with the pen. I would also suggest that if working within a phenomenographic framework, more discipline in the length of sessions (to, say, 30 minutes) and fewer sessions are required. Whilst the iterations of my analysis to narrow the dataset were useful for familiarisation with the data, I cannot attest that the effort spent here necessarily enhanced the formation of the outcome spaces. In previous graphic research (Sharman, 2012) I employed an electronic pen that permitted easier synchronisation of the graphic and verbal, and allowed flexible exposition – but limited to a small drawing area. Perhaps a product designer would be interested in working towards specific solutions that address these needs of projective techniques in research?

Head – Phenomenography

I did have earlier concern about the variety of outputs and conceptions that I was eliciting from my respondents, and how that might be respected within an analytical

framework. I had, after all, requested that my respondents be as different to each other as possible. Phenomenography was thus adopted for its emphasis on the range of ways of experiencing, as I had declared that I wished to surface my respondents' *experience* as subjects of the employability agenda. I suffered initial frustration at the sparsity of step-by-step indications about the phenomenographic method that were also linked to described and illustrated outcome spaces. There were meta-summations of phenomenographic process, and there were studies providing outcome spaces (in dramatically different forms, but with little reasoning of why that form was chosen nor indications of how the categories were arrived at). There were, however, few detailed studies that presented a journey from data, through detailed process of analysis, to outcome space and its rationales. I began to appreciate the parallels between the phenomenographic process and the speculative design process (as opposed to the engineering process). The 'product' was not yet known, only the parameters that it should meet and the materials available – my data. I realised that one had to practice and test phenomenography for oneself within an experiential, iterative cycle of learning. Once I had drawn the parallels between the phenomenographic and design processes, I was able to handle my data as I would iteratively test materials or tools within design – how could I 'make the most' of it? How could I understand its qualities? What would happen if...? This led, via, NVivo, to my initial 'readings' of the data. There, I documented various analytical 'probes' for their productivity, and decided against pursuing some as unprofitable. For instance, I eliminated examination of the stroke marks within the drawings since they produced meagre consistent meanings. And, I made the most of the extensive health-related interruption between acquisition of my data and detailed analysis of it – testing on my return whether I could 'cold read' the drawings with which I had lost familiarity (i.e. predict the verbal meanings I had forgotten that respondents ascribed to individual graphics). My primary finding was that whilst I thought I was interpreting assiduously what each respondent meant, the results indicated that I was interpreting rather what I would have meant had I drawn that symbol. This strengthened my resolve to bracket my own experiences and stances, ironically extracting more *fidelity* of meaning through fewer *judgements* of meaning – tending towards reading "what it said on the tin" rather than assessing what was meant by the qualities of its content. Graphic elicitation had permitted probing of the source data at time of collection, but

this later stage was the time to allow that data to mediate its own story. Respect for the integrity of meaning was also assisted by the lack of a harmonising imperative in phenomenography (i.e. towards revealing breadth and differences rather than towards commonality). For me, this provided an integrity of analysis that permitted people's inconsistencies to stand – a conception in one moment of encounter with respondents that is contradicted in another moment. Whilst the conceptions are probed for contradiction and veracity, each is nevertheless respected and captured without external judgement. Having said that, we have seen that there is a later stage of phenomenography where focus on the individual conception – datum – is acceded by focus on the collective – data – to form tentative (and then settled) categories:

When we talk about 'a way of experiencing something' we usually do so in terms of individual awareness ... When we talk about 'categories of description' we usually do so in terms of qualitatively different ways a phenomenon may appear to people of one kind or another. Thus categories of description refer to the collective level. (Marton & Booth, 1997 in Yates et al., 2012 pp. 105-106)

The referential and structural aspects of each category provide a tension between collectiveness and distinctiveness that determines the utility of each outcome space. Yates et al (2012) direct us to Marton & Booth's (1997) criteria for qualitatively assessing one's categories of description:

Marton and Booth (1997, 152) ...proposed three criteria for the quality of a set of categories of description. They suggest:

- i. Each category should reveal something distinct about a way of experiencing a phenomenon.
- ii. Each category should stand in a logical relationship with other categories.
- iii. The number of categories in a set is determined by the extent of variation. In any event it is limited in number.

(Yates et al., 2012 p. 106)

Each of my categories of description over my five outcome spaces fulfils each of these criteria. The first criterion is met in each of my categories by the extended description within each outcome space table (with appropriate elaboration and

exemplars). The accompanying diagrammatic figure for each outcome space satisfies the second relation criterion. The number of categories within each of my outcome spaces was developed according to the range of indications of conceptions emerging from the data, and the varying numbers of categories within each outcome space suggests compliance with the final criterion. In that respect, the ‘quality’ of my set of categories of description may be deemed successful. That my “additional transcripts” (Åkerlind, 2012 p. 122) – beyond those initially analysed – did not yield significantly, is potential confirmation of the endurance of the categories formed. But it also potentially indicates that, having solidified categories during an initial analysis, it may be extremely difficult for the same researcher to ‘reach’ outside of the framework thereby established. On whether the categories of description of my outcome spaces represent an optimal representation of the source artefacts and data, I align myself with Sandbergh’s (1997) quoting of Säljö’s conclusion on the matter:

It is... not possible to prove that the categories are the best possible ones. The categories are the constructions of the researcher and there is always a possibility that another researcher would have arrived at a different categorisation. (Säljö, 1988 in Sandbergh, 1997 p. 205)

A potential validity check of the categories of description is by inter-judge agreement on the development of categories and the outcome space. This was not logistically feasible within my practice but, in any case, the potency of inter-judge reliability is disputed. Sandberg (1997) presents compelling arguments about what is *not* achieved by such validation. First, it “overlooks researchers’ procedures” (Sandbergh, 1997 p. 206) and, indeed, could mask superficial data (i.e. there may be agreement, but nevertheless the data represents “general opinion” rather than “fundamental conceptions” (p. 206)). Second, Sandbergh posits that the objectivist epistemology of inter-judge reliability aligns poorly with phenomenological categories of description as they are not “externally related to reality” (p. 208). The categories of description are, rather: “intentionally constituted through the researcher’s interpretation.” (p. 208). In other words, inter-judge verification would discordantly claim objectivity about data that is expressly positioned as non-objective. The claim to validity of phenomenography, then, might appear hopeless, but Sandbergh reiterates that researcher reflexivity is the crucial verification:

Since we, as researchers, cannot escape from our interpretations in the research process, one possible criterion of reliability in researching conceptions would be *the researcher's interpretative awareness* (Sandberg, 1994). To maintain an interpretative awareness means to acknowledge and explicitly deal with our subjectivity through-out the research process instead of overlooking it. (Sandbergh, 1997 p. 209)

This thesis and its detailed explanation of interactions and process, and its laying-bare of subsequent analysis and interpretation, is intended to offer such a level of “researcher interpretative awareness” (Sandbergh, 1997).

Head, Heart & Hand

Returning to consider Guyatt’s (1976) unification of “Head, Heart and Hand” that encapsulates design practice. This research asked:

To what extent might exploiting design epistemologies within an inquisitive graphic practice reveal graphic design undergraduates’ experiences and understandings of the contingent and multi-contextual nature of employability?

I have resisted the temptation to return to my question and adapt it to perfectly fit what has subsequently emerged – though, admittedly, I might be more tempted had the question not been quite so well illuminated by my outcomes. I am retaining the question because it formed a leaping-off point for my design practice, and the rationales for my design practice emerged from it – not the question from them. In other words, the component elements of the question were pivotal to the subsequent design practice. If I were to adapt the question, I would clearly aim to incorporate the additional phrases *graphic elicitation* and *phenomenography* since both of these emerged as core components of my inquisitive triptych.

My response to my question is that is that graphic elicitation within a phenomenographic framework has revealed to a broad extent undergraduate revelations around employability, and I submit as supporting evidence:

- the large-scale golden artefacts produced with my respondents;
- the anonymised transcripts of the verbal record of our elicitation sessions;
- the forty-eight graphic and verbal extracts that formed the core of my phenomenographic analysis;
- the twelve rigorously-detailed ‘readings’ of my own familiarisation of my data;

- the intermediate ‘pools of meaning’ (in sticky-note form on boards, and extracted to the computer) that assisted my journey to my outcome space;
- the exposition above of my five outcomes spaces with their constituent twenty-eight categories of description;
- my five diagrams illustrating the relationships between the categories of description within each outcome space;
- my supporting interactive interface at <http://lifedrawing.graphics> as proof of the concept of retaining a probe within a phenomenographic analysis to the analysed artefacts, extracts, and transcripts.

The Contribution of the Interactive Interface

THE CONTRIBUTION of that final element – the interactive interface – is that it dynamically conjoins the head, heart and hand of my research. Its function was/ is two-fold. First, in the analysis. The interface provided a flexible content management platform using open-source software (‘WordPress’) and minor ‘plug-ins’ to manage media and text. With it, I was able to store the resolved individual graphic groupings of the blankets to form my preliminary groupings. The graphic groupings were extracted and prepared as individual illustrations, some of which occupy the exposition of the outcome spaces above. The interactive interface permitted all the graphic groupings to be matched and viewed alongside relevant verbal extracts. The interface also has very flexible facilities for definition and attribution of hierarchies of metadata for the analyst researcher. This means that any graphic or verbal extract can be attributed to any domain, theme, or outcome space category of description.

This hints at the second area of contribution of the interactive interface – as an expositional interactive website that enables a non-linear, visual and text-based interrogation of the data. It makes the data accessible through hierarchies of revelation. The user can display everything relevant to a whole outcome space, or to a particular category of description. Hyperlinks further permit the user to follow the data – from graphic grouping, via verbal extract, back to the original drawing and transcript. By doing so it somewhat subverts the normative presentation of phenomenographic outcomes by contributing not only a route from an outcome space’s category of description back to multiple constituent conceptions (and further to the raw source data), but also offers multiple routes for the enquiring user. Ultimately, though, the overlap between this thesis’s outcome spaces and the

interface's interactive outcome spaces is limited to the title of the outcome spaces and the text of the categories of description. My proof of concept of an interactive phenomenographic outcome space must now be extended to include the structural aspects that are included in the thesis but absent in the interface. The next steps here are to develop the proof of concept to a fully-formed web site that stands apart from the thesis's exposition of the outcome spaces, which themselves have distinct contribution.

The Contribution of the Outcome Spaces

As outlined earlier, each of the five phenomenographic outcome spaces are prescribed by a structural figure and a referential table. I detailed graphic and verbal exemplars of each category of description in the 'Outcomes' section. The structural figures are repeated in the following section as an aide-memoire for the reader, together with conclusions regarding the significance of what has been shown in each outcome space.

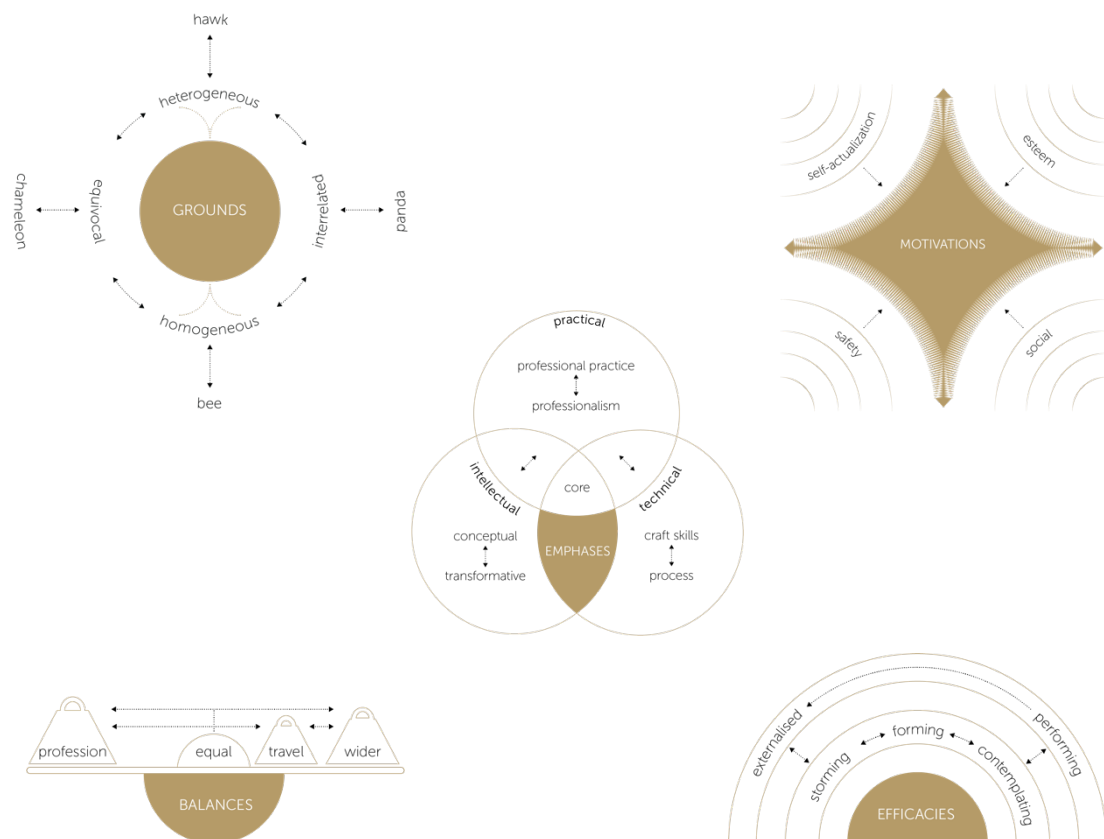


Figure 43 – Overview of Structural Aspects of Outcome Spaces

Grounds

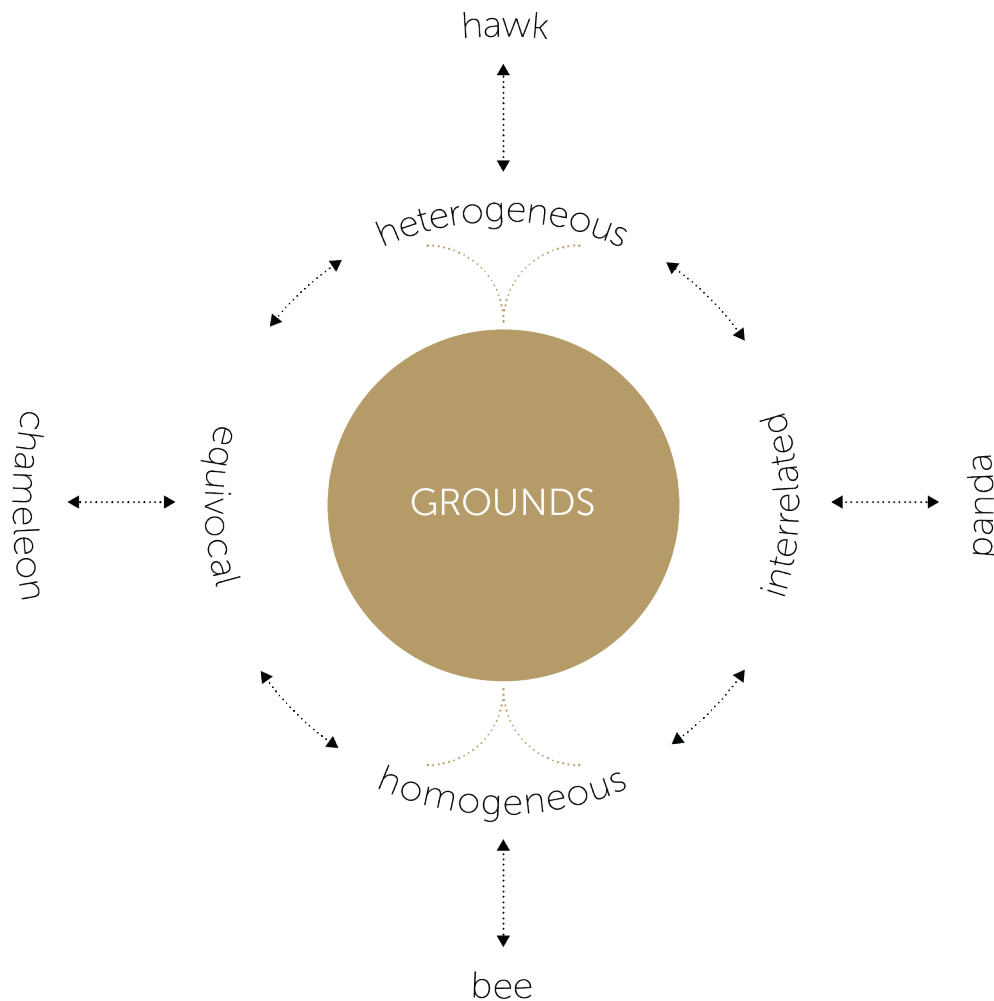


Figure 44 – Grounds Structural Overview as Planet

The *Grounds Outcome Space* demonstrates that there is correlation between conceptions of the territory of the graphic design field and conceptions of the strategies (to be) adopted within the field. The data does not assert causation (so the formulation of a particular view of industry might emerge from one's existing range of behaviours, rather than strategy as consequence). Nevertheless, it connotes two distinct 'rings' of conceptions around industry and profession within graphic design. The future satisfaction ('happiness') of any specific respondent may relate to a triadic match between his or her innate behaviours and beliefs, conceptions of the industry/field in which her or she finds him or herself, and the correlating conceived strategies for 'coping' with that environment. This offers better clarity for student, educator and

employer where there may be a misalignment that is causing dissatisfaction or poor performance.

THE SIGNIFICANCE is that the stakeholders of employability cannot assume that all students conceive of the 'lie of the land' for their onwards destinations either similarly or as direct poles, despite the duality particularly promoted by contemporary 'disrupter' companies. The outcomes space does recognise the two poles that correlate with the contemporary commentary of 'big corporation' (homogenous) versus 'numerous opportunities' (heterogeneous). In this commentary, it has been implied (and often expressly stated) that 'Big Corp' represents an outdated model of working associated with the industrial revolution, whilst new entrants are viewed as inherently nimble and reflexive. The latter represent themselves as 'disrupters', whose new modernity ironically heavily leans on historic notions of *liberté, égalité, fraternité* through a neoliberal lens.

THE CONTRIBUTION of this outcome space is that it shows that these poles present false dichotomies for students, and some are perceiving this dissonance – with unsettling effect to individual coping strategies. I have explained already how the contemporary employability agenda has bound itself to the idea that optimum employability lies in the student being able to 'flex' to the available opportunities, positioning 'success' as towards the heterogeneous pole. Language is used in that agenda which speaks of competitiveness – of gaining an 'edge' on others – rather than reflexively finding one's own 'edge'. This may well be the optimal position for those seeking work, but the other three conceptions and strategies emerging in this outcome space suggest that lived-perceptions of onward opportunities by students are more varied and subtle. The ground between the two poles of heterogenous and homogenous appears to have distinct emphases. *Equivocal/ Chameleon* demonstrates identification of a 'middle ground' where the respondent conceives an 'ideal' mismatch between themselves and the opportunities available, but determines to adapt in some way to create a match. Whereas, *Interrelated/ Panda* demonstrates similar recognition of a mismatch, but the practitioner has determined that they will 'hold out' for an opportunity that matches their own abilities or desires. Some of the commentary from undergraduates suggests the more dualistic language used by policy-makers and educators in that regard may harm students' own self-belief. These respondents have heard the warnings of the dangers of a changing

environment within the 'world of work'. But this polar position is the most destructive, because whilst the students have perceived a mismatch between themselves and opportunities, strategies for overcoming that mismatch are seen as obstructed, laden with insecurity, humiliating or self-detracting.

This demonstrates that, rather than express or direct students towards one 'ideal' position of employability (i.e. that they must match their conceptions and strategies to the few opportunities available), it may be more productive to assist each student to work out their own position without external criticism (implied or explicit). In other words, recognise (and even validate) undergraduate individually-constructed critiques of the workplace and their own disciplinary field; help students to recognise the potential contradictions and socially-located perplexities of this transition. Perhaps, then, fewer students will gravitate towards the more destructive position of *Homogenous/ Bee* with its narrow opportunities and internalised fault and ineffectuality.

The higher education institute, in its natural bid for employability for its graduates within a commoditised education system, may have become an evangelist of one conception of employability. Undergraduates are currently encouraged to explore their own employability (often against a meticulously-researched matrix of employability's composition). Could the adoption by the higher education institute of a more agnostic position – in which students are encouraged throughout their studies to not only explore their own employability characteristics, but also their own *stances* towards employability – benefit a wider range of students? This would mean that students were effectively individually creating their own programmes of employability (or opting out of doing so) from their own base of conceptions about what was ahead, with support from the institute.

Emphases

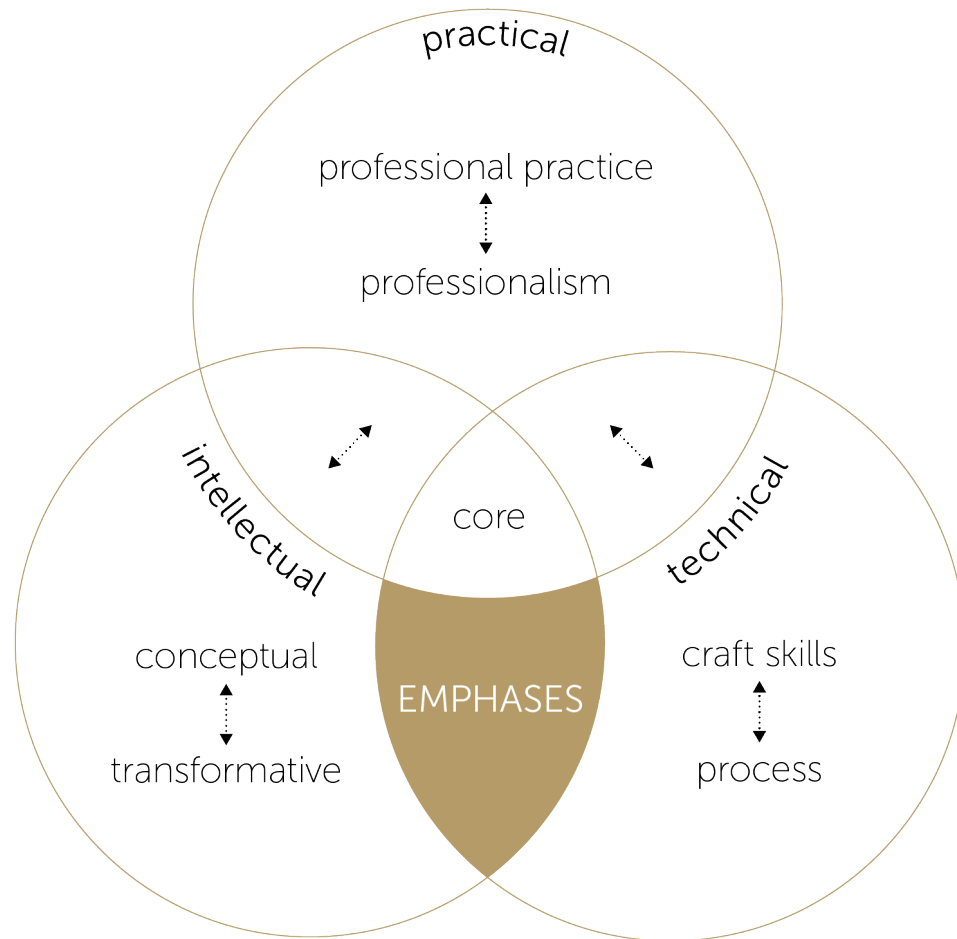


Figure 45 – Emphases Structural Overview as Venn – after Schenk (2016)

The categories of the Emphases Outcome Space were formed prior to and separately from my determining that, when paired, they correlated to Schenk's (2016 p. 196) Three Environments Model of Drawing in Design – one of Schenk's environments being design education. There is an alignment between the range of student conceptions of the elements of design education and established models and perspectives from previous analyses. Simultaneously, this alignment implies that the outcome space has achieved phenomenography's sought-after parsimony.

THE SIGNIFICANCE of this outcome space is that it demonstrates that students have a wide range of perceptions about what is or what has been, for them, 'important' in design education. It is appropriate here to acknowledge a relevant question posed to me by a graphic design educator about these student perceptions. The question, I am certain from my interactions with educators across the UK, is one that the vast

majority of educators strive to be answered in the affirmative. That question was: *But, on the whole, were respondents positive about their graphic design education?* My response is somewhat of a squib – that the focus of phenomenography is on surfacing the *range* rather than the *proportions* of conceptions, so any conclusion deriving from my phenomenographic framework would be speculative.

THE CONTRIBUTION of this outcome space is to affirm variation of approaches and emphases across programmes of graphic design higher education. There may be a perception that the Emphases Outcome Space in particular is advocating that graphic design higher education programmes must ‘hit’ the whole range of conceptions proffered by these students. That is not the case. I suggest that part of a respondent’s positivity and satisfaction is that she or he is on the graphic design programme that is the most *appropriate* to his or her own aspirations and ways of experiencing the world – particularly relevant are the categories of the *Emphases* outcome space, but all of the outcome spaces are relevant. So, I do not proffer that graphic design programmes standardise to some happy-medium approach intended to attract the widest range of potential students and their fees (albeit there are fiscal realities of the commoditised education market). That is in danger of, to contort McClure (1901), attempting to please all of the students all of the time. Not only is that unfeasible, but tiresome. Rather, the emergent categories of this outcome space in particular might suggest that the vibrancy and *meanings* of the specific emphases within different programmes be clearly signalled to prospective students.

Programmes can – should – be distinctive; and institutions should celebrate what that means for graduates of the programme, ensuring always that they consider approaches to support widening participation and accessibility.

Motivations

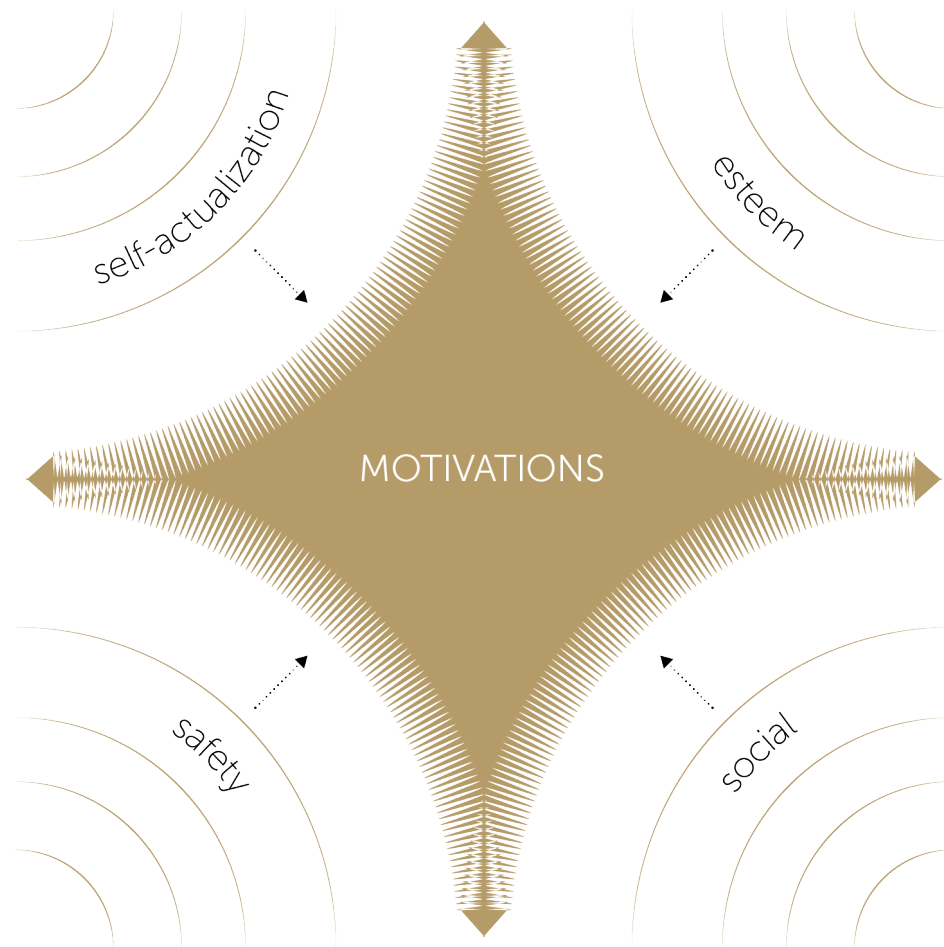


Figure 46 – Motivations Structural Overview as Quadrophonic Soundscape

The categories within the Motivation Outcome Space were, like Emphases, formed prior to realising that their essence could be encapsulated using an existing model – in this case Maslow's (1943 pp. 372-382) Theory of Human Motivations. This again suggests that the parsimony of description being sought has been found. But that theory is debated for its relevance to contemporary society. Whilst I found that the referential aspects did align somewhat with Maslow, I had to narrowly define *self-actualization* as more focussed on internal knowing than on attaining capacity to 'give back' (to society). That was for two reasons. First, that 'giving back' cuts-across each element, but practically is a socially-focussed construct (hence my placing it in *social*). And also, because contemporary technology (particular social media) appears to permit easy projection of oneself to the outside world. That might be easily conflated with 'giving back' – but lacks substantive sacrificial component. This

form of social interaction, it might be argued, may be aligned to *esteem* issues. This hints at the significance of this outcome space.

THE SIGNIFICANCE is that, for all the categories' alignments to Maslow's (Maslow, 1943; Maslow, 1970) theory, I could not represent the structural aspect of the Motivations Outcome Space using the hierarchical pyramid so often used to illustrate Maslow's theory. The pyramid implies that each element is built on the foundation provided by the former element, and that each need (and so motivation) builds successively towards constructing a harmonious 'self'. That was not unanimously the conception of my respondents. Rather, each of the motivations and needs may be conceived as in tension with the others – for instance, the conception that the 'self-actualized' sense of one's own creativity provided by graphics education may be eroded by the work one performs in professional graphics practice to provide the expensive 'safety' of shelter. Hence my 'soundscape' with four interfering soundwaves – forming complex patterns of interference – sometimes constructive and sometimes destructive. This may be simply a manifestation of Beck's contemporary industrial 'Risk Society' (Beck, 1992) – of factors beyond our respondents' control – and their quest to each produce the self-authored biography of Giddens' (1991) modernity.

THE CONTRIBUTION of this outcome space is that it indicates that the respondents' future world is beginning to be conceived differently to recent previous generations. Conceptions of first acquiring security (for instance of tenure or of one's own shelter), on which to build all else in life, are becoming redundant. We may be in an interstitial period of the contemporary realities of employability. Whilst undergraduates are now 'digital natives' (those who do not recall a time before digital computation and communications), they are not yet gig-economy natives – they did know different paradigms of the work-world into which they are potentially stepping. Vocabulary is important – one person's flexibility and liberty are another's insecurity. Not all respondents conceive motivations of their own employability in 'new' terms – these respondents are unlikely to be mollified by twenty-first century re-branding of 'piece work' as 'gig economy', nor by advocating a lack of permanent employment contract as providing the liberty of 'self-employment'. To engage these respondents with employability with that vocabulary risks excluding or losing them along the way, because their way of experiencing employability is not pyramidal

stability but quadrophonic interference. Again, undergraduates potentially require an opportunity not to just ‘match’ skills and abilities to employability matrices whilst in higher education, but also to contemplate and express their own positions about contemporary notions of employability. This should be considered by those charged with Harvey’s (1999) operationalizing of employability within the higher education institute (including educators), and particularly by those who may be operating from a relative position of work-security. This further implies that approaches to programmes of employability may need to be student-led and individually-created.

Balances

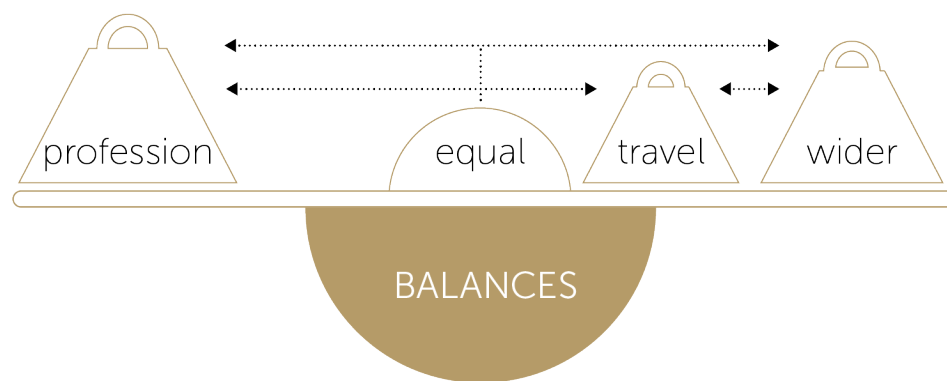


Figure 47 – Balances Structural Overview as Scale

Within the Balances Outcome Space, the *Profession* category ameliorated by the *Travel* and *Wider* categories (illustrated by the stasis of Figure 47) is recognisable to many as illustrating the much governmentally-ascribed ‘hard-working-family’ member who takes holidays each year to rejuvenate from contribution to national prosperity and family obligations. This, even though it emerges from the conceptions of many young adults with no progeny nor with full-time work. So, this outcome space might be thought anodyne. Yet, formulations of balance are far from *neutral*, since the constitution of balance indicates wider conceptions about underlying priorities and expectations of life – and expectations of others.

THE SIGNIFICANCE of this outcome space is that, whilst Figure 47 represents a single position of composite categories of balance, the greater point is that it demonstrates that there are *four* (not three) component conceptions, and they are dynamic. The *Equal* category is not simply a pseudo-category formed of the others, but has distinct

validity by being a manifest conception of a (sometimes notional) ideal. *Equal* balance might be formed temporally by balance of the other categories, but so are all the categories – one comes at the expense of the others. Though it may be difficult for a young person to conceive, balance is about how one will use the finite resource of one's energy and one's life.

THE CONTRIBUTION of this outcome space is that whereas there is frequently implied a dichotomy between the two priorities of professional life and wider life, *four* distinct priorities around balance are conceived in practice. The inclusion of the *Equal* category forms an emphatic prompt that not all respondents seek equilibrium, and that this cannot be assumed in discourse of employability with students. For many, the goal is not a horizontal balance. But of particular interest in those espousing balance for this respondent group was how potently *Travel* was perceived – and not always simply as a form of escapism, but also as creatively enriching. The role of travel in employability requires further research.

It cannot be determined how or why the respondent conceives of any specific balance: they may have been inculcated by governmental espousals or parental advocacy; they may be based on personal experience within education, the workplace, or wider life; and/ or any range of factors. Balance is personal. And the balances for a specific individual vary according to their relative conceptions at any particular time (or telling). Of all the outcome spaces, conceptions of balance were revealed as the most precarious – wider life was frequently expressed as that which follows work security, despite simultaneous expressions of work security as illusive. The inference is clear – that matters of life balance can be indefinitely postponed. Perhaps, then, it is unsurprising that no structural connections could be drawn between conceptions of balance and conceptions of the 'ground' of professional environments or working strategies, nor to conceptions of motivations.

This indicates that the instrumental vocational emphasis of employability within higher education may obscure the meta-issues of *why* one works and what that contributes to oneself and others. Yet again, this implies a partial engagement with employability, and so with the undergraduate's purpose in her or his programme of study. This might be addressed by discursive approaches led by the individual's conception of *why* they might wish to possess employability (beyond the obvious and

easy target of earning potential). The *what*, *how*, *who* and *when* can then be targeted around her or his response – and having examined his or her own *why*, the individual can then create or select (with guidance) her or his own opportunities for engagement with employability to develop aspects deemed individually important and relevant.

Efficacies

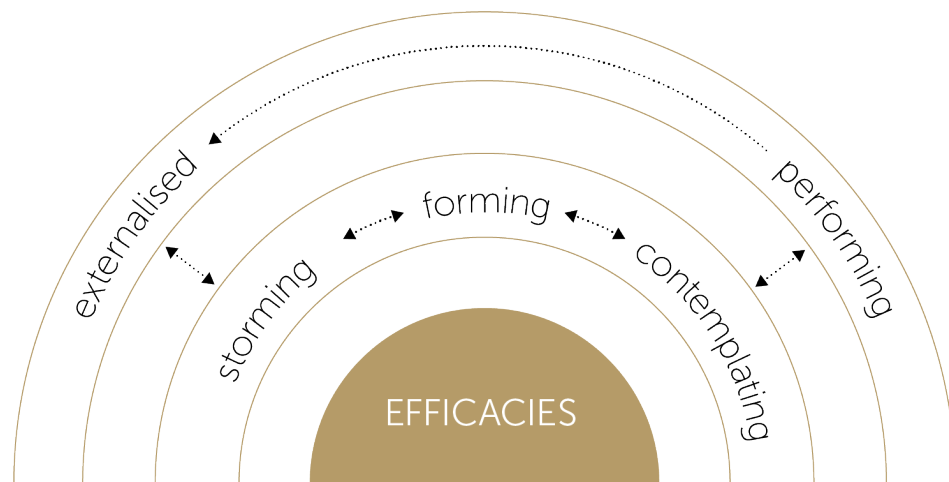


Figure 48 – Efficacies Structural Overview as Rainbow

The conceptions of the Efficacies Outcome Space emerged from a broader range of external horizons than the categories of the other outcome spaces. In that respect, one might confer that conceptions of efficacy are the most ‘infectious’ to employability. Again, a category does not represent any specific individual operating exclusively (or even dominantly) within any specific category of efficacy. It represents, rather, that an individual has – for a specific matter or event – expressed a conception of their own potency which correlates with the category.

THE SIGNIFICANCE of this outcome space is that it represents students’ conceptions of their own power and control over a situation – but by proxy it also indicates how any individual student frames the rights and responsibilities of others, and by extension their own preparedness to act/ perform/ be within the world. The distinctions between the *Contemplating* and *Performing* categories indicate this – each on a different band of Figure 48’s rainbow. *Contemplating* indicates conceptions of power and control – but within the ‘internalised’ band. It is speculative. It is only through the osmosis of experiencing that power externally – *Performing* – that this becomes an (in the

normative sense of the word) experiential belief. One's conception of efficacy is thus transformed from speculative power and control to substantiated self-efficacy belief. The one-way 'shortcut' from *Performing* to *Externalised* represents the potent consequence of *Performing* (self-efficacy belief). If *Externalised* efficacy were a blood-sucking tick, then *Performing* is the tweezer that dislodges it from the person. But, maintaining the metaphor, it is only a tweezer and not an insecticide – conceptions of lack of agency threaten to 'burrow in' on each encounter with the unfamiliar.

THE CONTRIBUTION of this outcome space is that, by loosely borrowing terminology from Tuckman's (1965) sequences of formation of small groups, the outcome space provides distinct categories of conceptions that may assist to pinpoint the stage of efficacy of an individual within a specific encounter or experience. So, effort of the student and others involved in employability's operationalization is focussed on negotiation or contemplation of transition to the next stage, rather than on futile and potentially destructive criticism of how the individual formed their stance or position.

As a Whole

THE SIGNIFICANCE of the whole set of outcome spaces is that they provide evidence of how individually-conceived are students' understandings and motivations around employability. This leads to an emphatic practical intimation for those involved in employability within higher education, which provides my over-arching contribution.

MY CONTRIBUTION is to assert that whilst group/ cohort initiatives around employability may address aspects of employability, their contribution for each individual can only ever be *possibilistic*. I am going to adapt the acronym *SLICC* from the *Employability* area of University of Edinburgh's web site (University of Edinburgh, 2017) to advocate how employability's impact on the individual might instead be made *probabilistic*.

First, it is unfeasible to achieve broad relevance when employability measures are led by others – it must be led by the individual student. This provides the first two initials of an acronym borrowed outright from University of Edinburgh (University of Edinburgh, 2017): 'SL' – *Student Led*. Further, the outcome spaces of this research demonstrate that the start-point of each student is a set of individual conceptions. It matters less how these were derived than how they might be developed. This

provides an adaptation of the next two initials from University of Edinburgh (University of Edinburgh, 2017): 'IC' – which stands in my adaptation for *Individually Conceived*.

I propose that the data of my research substantiates the notion within higher education of Student-Led Individually-Conceived Employability (SLICE). Most universities are already providing a range of employability measures, and *SLICE* provides a structural scaffold for the students of those universities. This research's outcome spaces and interactive interface (perhaps in a simplified form) offer an outline vocabulary, structure and exemplars for each student to consider his or her own individual start-point, and navigate the employability measures offered by the institution. The outcome spaces and interface, in simplified-form, might inspire the student to devise her or his own measures too, and these should be given appropriate recognition, support, and credit by the higher education institute.

Next Steps

My proposal for Student-Led Individually-Conceived Employability (SLICE) clearly requires testing with students. The language used in this thesis will undoubtedly require adaptation for the student audience, and the presentation of the outcome spaces must be considered. Might each student's own SLICE, with appropriate evidence, be recognised for study credit? Could a percentage of a student's elective credits in *each* year of a programme of study be achieved through SLICE? In some institutions, this would require only minor adaptation, with SLICE providing simply a discursive 'wrapper' for existing opportunities for students. The important overriding ethos is recognition that each student begins at a unique start-point and work towards his or her own end-point. Measurement is not against a pre-set list of skills and abilities, but against the development and reflection that each student has made through the opportunities that they have accessed and self-initiated. The interactive interface might be developed specifically in this regard. Perhaps, if developed into a full-blown web site (or sub-section), it might permit the user to indicate to which user group they belonged, and orientate the vocabulary and presentation of the outcome spaces appropriately. So, the interactive interface becomes not only an impactful exposition of this specific research, but it also contributes to the discursive element of employability that is so scarce and important with current students. The impact is

extended beyond an *examination* of undergraduate conceptions of employability to become a tool for the *development* of undergraduate conceptions of employability.

There are other possibilities too for using the notions within the outcome spaces. For instance, there is heavy emphasis on the portfolio as an admissions instrument for the art and design institute. A specific form of these outcome spaces could supplement the dialogue between prospective students and institutions beyond the submission of portfolios from applicants. That is, my *Grounds Planet*, *Emphases Venn*, *Motivations Soundscape*, *Balances Scale*, and *Efficacies Rainbow* might provide the seed of a toolkit for initially distinguishing a design programme, and then further, for assessing the suitability of prospective candidates for the programmes and the programme for candidates. That is because the outcome spaces are derived – at heart – from the range of *lived* experiences of the students of eight diverse graphic design programmes, rather than aspirations and espousals of higher education art and design prospectuses.

Might the vocabulary and conceptions (again, in simplified form) also offer improved dialogue between the graduate and prospective employers? Is there an opportunity for the undergraduate to form a tangible record of their own conceptions, motivations and needs around employability using this vocabulary/ framework that might provide assistance in employment interviews – an improved eloquence and fluency?

On the matter of my data being *capable* of illuminating ‘overall satisfaction’ of respondents’ graphic design education – it appears likely that if subjected to an analytical framework better focussed on that measure, then such an indication might emerge. However, given that the data anonymises not only the individual respondents but also the institutions, the meaningfulness of that endeavour may be limited. There is, undoubtedly, more capable of being done with the source data from this research. But, given my (appropriately) laborious, iterative implementation of phenomenographic analysis, time dictates that any further inspection of the data must be in a different guise. In that regard, I feel some empathy with Säljö’s earlier assertion that within phenomenography: “the research object becomes somewhat ephemeral” (Säljö, 1997 p. 179). On the other hand, I hope that my interactive interface – for all that it might not expose, and its innate incongruity with a phenomenographic approach – does ameliorate that ephemerality. It provides

confirmation that the outcome spaces and their categories of description *are* describing lived experiences and conceptions of real people.

To conclude absolutely, the convergence of graphic elicitation within a phenomenographic recursive-analytical framework was productive. I had wished to test the practical benefits and impediments of both graphic elicitation and phenomenography, and both were entirely coherent with practices of the iterative design environment. I would advocate further exploration within design environments of both. Rich data emerged from the endeavour, resulting in an affirmative retort to the research question: *exploiting design epistemologies within an inquisitive graphic practice **did** reveal graphic design undergraduates' experiences and understandings of the contingent and multi-contextual nature of employability.* And, better than envisaged – by employing graphic elicitation and phenomenography in concert.

New knowledge was created on the discourse of employability, and new insights proffered on the subject. The twenty-eight different categories of description demonstrate that the sought after diverse conceptions of employability were captured – and the graphic and verbal extracts reveal accompanying individual contextualisation. The mapping of previous different models and perspectives of employability to my four dimensions of discussion did permit an open discussion with current undergraduates largely free of technicalities of employability's normative discourse. The expanse of these dimensions – (graphic design) education; wider life (outside of profession); professional life (and practice); industry or field (wider tenor of practice) – might be considered useful for others engaging current students with matters around employability.

But I did confine myself to graphic design students, whose conceptions naturally refer most strongly, and sometimes exclusively, to that field of practice. Given the productivity of that focus, such exploration is desirable in other fields around undergraduate experiences of employability and other matters relating to their field. I proposed graphic elicitation as aligning to the epistemologies and practices of graphic design in particular. Ashe's "discursively constituted" (Ashe, 2012 p. 133) employability work with critical studies undergraduates similarly used the epistemologies of her subject field. Whilst graphic elicitation may have relevance and productivity for other fields, it must be considered whether it is the most appropriate

form of inquiry within each specific field. It should be considered whether this approach is universal and not dependent upon respondent levels of visual literacy (which as stated earlier may be an inhibitor). An appropriate proximate widening that might more easily justify graphic elicitation is broader research extended to the affiliated fields of the design school, perhaps with additional longitudinal aspects providing a temporal perspective. Certainly, it appears appropriate to wonder whether the undergraduates' ways of experiencing employability develops post-graduation, and in what regards. This research has yielded enough to indicate that methods based on similar considerations might provide a much richer data set than questionnaires focussed primarily on skill sets – and it is hoped that the practice of this research might prove somewhat valuable to such a future venture. I also hope that the interactive interface provides a template for how such research might be formed and presented for maximised impact. I look forward, too, to the testing of an implementation of Student-Led Individually-Conceived Employability (SLICE) in the higher education environment.

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Appendix A: Life Drawing Mappings to Models and Stances of Employability

USEM Model

Within the dominant body of commenters are York & Knight with their 'USEM Model' (Knight and Yorke, 2002), which has a goal of accentuating that employability and good learning can be “closely aligned” (Yorke, Knight, et al., 2008 p. 2) rather than “oppositional constructs” (Yorke, Knight, et al., 2008 p. 2). There are “four broad and inter-related components” (Yorke, Knight, et al., 2008 p. 5) within the model, being:

- Understanding of the subject;
- Skills;
- Efficacy beliefs; and
- Metacognition

(Knight and Yorke, 2002 p. 264).

The former two elements of the USEM model are about development of knowledge and skills for professional life. Amongst my respondents, having so far been primarily developed within their graphic design education. Efficacy beliefs are about “self-theories and personal qualities” (Knight and Yorke, 2002 p. 265), particularly in relation to ones’ prospective workplace and thus: “the extent to which students feel that they might ‘be able to make a difference’ – not every time, but in a probabilistic way” (Yorke, Knight, et al., 2008 p. 5). Meta-cognition includes “self-awareness regarding the student’s learning, and the capacity to reflect on, in and for action” (Yorke, Knight, et al., 2008 p. 5), such situational-awareness providing the student with connection to their inner-being (and reflection about their wider life) and the broader contexts of the industry or field within which they practice, or wish to practice. Mappings of USEM elements to Life Drawing’s dimensions are shown in Table 6.

Table 6 – Mapping USEM Elements to Life Drawing Dimensions

Understanding →	gained within		demonstrating to employer in	knowledge required for
Skills →	developed within		demonstrating to employer in	preparedness to enter
Efficacy Beliefs →		affecting attitude to	about own potency in	to operate within
Metacognition →		about own wishes for	about own wishes for	about broad contexts of
	↓	↓	↓	↓
	graphics education	wider life	professional life	industry or field

DOTS Model

The DOTS Model (Law and Watts, 1977) is a mnemonically-convenient rearrangement of its elements of:

- Opportunity Awareness;
- Self Awareness;
- Decision Learning; and
- Transition Learning.

(Law and Watts, 1977)

Both the Key to Employability Model and the SOAR model (detailed in the following sections) proclaim foundations in the DOTS model, in the former by providing “the main theoretical model that has underpinned this work (Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007), and the latter being described as a: “variant” (Kumar, 2009 p. 8) of DOTS. So it is unsurprising that McCash (2006) critiques that (‘career education)’:

... provision remains based on the traditional DOTS model of decision learning, opportunity awareness, transition learning and self- awareness. It is argued that the persistent and hegemonic status of this model has delayed the adoption of innovative theory and the development of creative new frameworks. (McCash, 2006 p. 429)

This appears to be somewhat acknowledged by one of the authors of the DOTS model in presenting a: “Career Learning Space [for] New-DOTS thinking” (Law, 2007 p. 35), in which he suggests that conceptualisations of employability had shifted in the three intervening decades since DOTS, specifically in relation to “contemporary policy concerns” (Law, 2007 p. 44) relating to “changing global conditions,... flexible career-management,... social-exclusion... [and] life-long learning” (Law, 2007 p. 44)

Justification for the breadth of my four dimensions of ‘Life Drawing’ emerges from Law’s (2007) New-DOTS explication that:

It is a moot point which role offers more leverage on life – worker, partner, citizen or consumer. In people's lives, each is linked to all. (Law, 2007 p. 52)

Because both Key to Employability and SOAR models are founded on DOTS, the mappings of elements of DOTS to my dimensions of 'Life Drawing' are covered by those mappings (which follow).

Key to Employability Model

Dacre Pool & Sewell (2007) contribute the Key to Employability Model, employing the acronym CareerEDGE as:

... a useful, practical way of explaining the concept of employability and indicates that it is the “key” to choosing and securing occupations in which the graduate has the opportunity to achieve satisfaction and success. (Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007 p. 281)

In this model, specific learning is targeted at entering, maintaining and navigating the 'job market' as 'Career Development Learning' on the grounds that:

There is little to be gained in developing employability if, at the end of the day, a student cannot identify a market in which to advertise their newly developed employability. (Foster, 2006 p.5 in Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007 p. 284)

The elements of this model are:

- Career Development Learning;
- Experience;
- Degree;
- Generic Skills;
- Emotional Intelligence;
- Reflection & Evaluation; and
- 3 'Ss' of Self-efficacy, Self-confidence, and Self-esteem.

(Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007)

This model's 'Degree' elements conflates the 'understanding' and 'skills' of the USEM model, but then additionally extracts non-subject skills (referred to elsewhere as 'transferrable skills' or 'core skills') to a separate 'Generic Skills' element. Within my dimensions, the EDGE 'Degree' element is gained within 'graphics education' and forms a passport to enter the 'industry or field' of graphics, and something to particularly demonstrate to employers for any particular part of one's 'professional

life'. It is the 'Generic Skills' element, though, which permits easier transition across and out with the 'industry or field'.

'Emotional Intelligence' in this model has a partial mapping to USEM's 'Meta-cognition', but it goes further. Whereas in 1955, Feintuch was proposing that: "the fields of education and vocational guidance" (Feintuch, 1955 p. 17) had responsibility to moderate: "the development of negative attitudes which hinder vocational adjustment." (Feintuch, 1955 p. 17), emotional intelligence is about self-recognition and self-regulation of one's own emotions, and even to: "... generate emotions so as to assist thought" (Mayer:1997vh in Mayer et al., 2004 p. 197). This has connotations of the 'stiff upper lip' of P.G. Wodehouse (1963), and therefore its stereotypical associations of social-class and gender. In any case, it is a component of the 'Key to Employability' model to be accounted for in my study, and correlates to an ability to regulate within one's 'wider life' and 'professional life'. 'Reflection & Evaluation' equates broadly to USEM's meta-cognition, and maps similarly to Life Drawing's dimensions of employability.

All the elements described so far form the 'bow' (or handle) or the barrel of the visual key metaphor employed in the model, and imply therefore that they are readily transparent or available. But there are three final elements (collectively referred to as the 'three Ss' which use the 'cut' part of the key – that which makes the key unique. These are 'self-efficacy', 'self-confidence', and 'self-esteem'. The implication of the visual metaphor, then, is that these are much more complex and coded, and has some correlation to USEM's 'Efficacy beliefs', though the purposeful division into triptych implies a span outside and within profession. The description of this element of the model focusses on the role of 'mastery experiences' towards the formation of these attributes, and suggests various ways in which mastery experiences – "the opportunity [for students] to try a particular task themselves" (Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007 p. 286) – are implemented within education, such as:

work experience, realistic work environments (...where students get the chance to be involved with activities such as publishing, theatre performances, etc.), live student projects (where students work in a consultancy role to outside agencies) and some career development learning activities such as making job applications. (Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007 p. 286)

This maps similarly to Life Drawing's dimensions as does USEM's 'Efficacy Beliefs', but the addition in the Key to Employability model of social contexts regarding self extends these beliefs into wider life too (see Table 7).

Table 7 – Mapping Key to Employability Elements to Life Drawing Dimensions

Career Dev. Learning	→			to establish & navigate	to identify 'market'
Experience	→			contribution to	
Degree	→	knowledge & skills from		demon'ing to employer in	knowledge & skills to enter
Generic Skills	→				required across and outside
Emotional Intelligence	→		to self- regulate in	to self- regulate in	
Reflection & Evaluation	→	of learning within	about own wishes for	about own wishes for	about broad contexts of
Self (belief)	→	from mastery in	affecting attitude to	in own potency in	to operate within
		↓	↓	↓	↓
		graphics education	wider life	professional life	industry or field

SOAR Model

The acronym SOAR contains the initial letters of four elements of a model of employability, which Kumar (2009) claims as:

a curriculum enhancement model you can use flexibly to integrate personal and career development with good academic learning and employability. (Kumar, 2009 p.xiv)

The elements of this model are:

- Self;
- Opportunity;
- Aspirations; and
- Results.

(Kumar, 2009 p.xiv)

The model derives from a social constructivist perspective of learning, which is an arena often laden with heavy analysis, and yet is a “process model for holistic, integrated and personalized learner development” (Kumar, 2009 p. 13), with emphasis on process of developing employability rather than conceptualising employability. The four elements have correlation to the well-known elements of the process acronym SWOT that involves identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Kumar (2009) states that:

The differences between SWOT and SOAR are mainly those of vocabulary and emphasis, but these differences can add up to much better attitudes and outcomes. (Kumar, 2009 p. 9)

So whilst being guided by social constructivist outlook, the “better attitudes” (of students) brought by SOAR implies some compliance too with earlier-discussed perspectives about suppression and modification of “negative attitudes which hinder vocational adjustment” (Feintuch, 1955 p. 17), though it is not implied that its “better attitudes and outcomes” are not relevant to wider-life.

‘Self’ relates to what Kumar describes as a: “Self-Awareness Skillset” (Kumar, 2009 p. 78) which has elements similar in title to the ‘Efficacy beliefs’ of USEM and ‘Three [self] Ss’ of Key to Employability, but the social aspects are emphasised further in

SOAR, which highlights personality through interactions with others and one's environment (Kumar, 2009 p. 154). The declarative/ action focus of 'self' is distinctly separated in SOAR to 'Opportunity', though very contextualised by one's own circumstances, social position, and environment. The process advocates frank appraisal rather than pipe dream, with an eye to: "the nature and future of the changing world" (Kumar, 2009 p. 208) (so a broad contextual focus implying whole industry and field than simply one's own professional pathway. The 'Aspiration' element is somewhat counter-intuitive, in that it is again not about 'wishes', but builds upon the findings of the two former elements of 'Self' and 'Opportunity', since:

... Aspirations are formed, tested, implemented and adjusted, largely as a result of the dynamic interactions between Self and Opportunity. (Kumar, 2009 p. 247)

There is a focus on decision-making in the light of what one has determined about one's self and one's opportunities. In the SOAR model, aspiration is a pragmatic consideration of what to aim for. And having determined what to aim for, 'Results' is largely constituted of demonstrating to employers subject skills, writing capacity, and oral adeptness, and awareness of recruitment processes. It is analogous to the 'Career' elements of Key to Employability.

Though the model strongly acknowledges and surfaces the wider contexts of wider-life, social-positioning, and contemporary society, it is interesting to note that its 'Results' element is indicative of a focus on setting-up the student for work-life. Mapping of SOAR elements to Life Drawing's dimensions are shown in Table 8.

Table 8 – Mapping SOAR Elements to Life Drawing Dimensions

Self	→	notions gained in	notions gained in		
Opportunity	→		within contexts of		within broad contexts of
Aspirations	→			targeting decisions to	decision about position in
Results	→			demon'ing to employer in	
		↓	↓	↓	↓
		graphics education	wider life	professional life	industry or field

Other Employability Stances

There are many other commentators about employability and its meaning and contingencies, which may also be mapped to the top-level dimensions proposed for this study of (Graphics) Education, Wider-Life, Professional-Life, and Industry/ Field. Whilst other contributions are not framed specifically as ‘models’ of employability, they do represent existing discourses. Rothwell & Arnold’s (2007), Harvey (Harvey, 2001), and Hillage & Pollard’s (1998) are such examples.

Rothwell & Arnold (2007) present an:

11-item measure of self-perceived employability... based on an analysis of the different elements of employability likely to be relevant to individuals.
(Rothwell and Arnold, 2007 p. 35)

The 11 items lie mainly within Life Drawing’s ‘Professional Life’ dimension only, since the method was a quantitative analysis: “... by questionnaire to 200 human resources professionals in the UK”, based on validating that ‘self-perceived employability’ was a distinct concept. For my study the most significant finding from Rothwell & Arnold (2007) is that:

... we must be cautious in treating self-perceived employability as a unitary construct. A two-factor solution produced a fairly clear split between items reflecting internal (i.e. within-organisation) and external employability.
(Rothwell and Arnold, 2007 p. 36)

This tends to support the additional Life Drawing ‘Industry & Field’ dimension of wider context, though little of Rothwell & Arnold’s (2007) study relates to my ‘(Graphics) Education’ or ‘Wider Life’ dimensions.

The thesis has already demonstrated that the ‘overlays’ (Harvey, 2001 p. 98) to a core notion that employability is about: “propensity of students to obtain a job” (Harvey, 2001 p. 98) actually describe fundamental contestation about the construct of employability, including affects of its subsequent enactment ‘on’ students. But Harvey elaborated a narrower account of five ways in which the core was overlaid. These were:

- Job type – whether ‘success’ represents a ‘graduate-level’ job, ‘fulfilling’ work, or any job.

- Timing – of ‘success’ in getting such a job and subsequent trajectories?
- Attributes on recruitment – questioning whether ‘success’ indicates that the student is largely equipped for most facets of a new job, or whether it is about abilities to do so within a longer time-frame?
- Further learning – relating to the concept of willingness and fitness to partake in life-long learning.
- ‘Employability skills’ – relating to both core and generic skills and attributes.

(Harvey, 2001 p. 98)

Again, these aspects can be readily mapped to three of the dimensions of my Life Drawing study. The first three overlays are emphasised within the decisions, contingencies, and requirements of both dimensions of ‘Professional Life’ and ‘Industry or Field’. The latter two suggest capacities nurtured in the dimension of ‘(Graphics) Education’. But there is little in Harvey’s overlays which suggests anything about Wider-Life.

Hillage & Pollard (1998) offer a succinct definition of employability:

In simple terms, employability is about being capable of getting and keeping fulfilling work. More comprehensively employability is the capability to move self-sufficiently within the labour market to realise potential through sustainable employment. (Hillage and Pollard, 1998 p. 2)

They present a key finding that relates to the arena of my study – employability through the eyes of the individual – in concluding that:

For the individual, employability depends on:

- their assets in terms of the knowledge, skills and attitudes they possess,
- the way they use and deploy those assets,
- the way they present them to employers, and
- crucially, the context (e.g. personal circumstances and labour market environment) within which they see work.

(Hillage and Pollard, 1998 p. 1)

The first element clearly maps to Life Drawing’s ‘(Graphic Education)’, whilst all three former elements map to ‘Professional Life’, with the final ‘crucial’ element relating to wider contexts mapping to ‘Industry or Field’. Though this key finding does not have

a mapping to my 'Wider Life' dimension, Hillage & Pollard (1998) do emphasis elsewhere that:

Finally and crucially, the ability to realise or actualise 'employability' assets depends on the individual's personal and external circumstances and the inter-relationship between the two. This includes ... personal circumstances – e.g. caring responsibilities, disabilities, and household status can all affect their ability to seek different opportunities and will vary during an individual's life cycle. (Hillage and Pollard, 1998 p. 3)

It has been demonstrated through these mappings how the dominant discourses within employability are captured by the practice of this study, and particularly by my adoption of an inquisitive framework which utilises the four dimensions of:

- Graphic Design Education;
- Wider-Life;
- Professional-Life; and
- Industry/ Field.

Appendix B: Provenance and Distinctions of Phenomenography

Provenance

Tight (2016) indicates that phenomenography's roots, albeit not yet named, lie in 1970s Sweden, with significant adoption in Australia, and some interest from the United Kingdom. But a range of publications (Tight, 2016; Samuelsson and Pramling, 2016; Åkerlind, 2012; Lamb et al., 2011; Hasselgren and Beach, 2006; Alsop and Tompsett, 2006; Linder and Marshall, 2003; Ashworth and Lucas, 2000; Sandbergh, 1997; Svensson, 1997; Hazel et al., 1997; S. Booth, 1997b; Marton, 1992; Marton, 1986) point towards the term first emerging in print in the work of Marton (1981), with Marton himself (1986) affirming it 'coined' in 1979. This appears dissonant with the term's appearance a quarter of a century earlier in Sonneman's (1954 p. 344) book about phenomenological psychology; and Needleman's grim intervening assessment that: "... the 'good for nothing brother' of phenomenology... [is what] ... we might term 'phenomenography'" (Binswanger and Needleman, 1963 p. 37). Cibangu & Hepworth (2016) assert that 1902 (a half-century earlier): "represents the first recorded use of the word phenomenography" (2016 p. 151). In any case, it is Marton's (1981) proposition for phenomenography that is largely the incarnation of the term that is being referenced in contemporary contexts – this has been termed Martonian (Cibangu and Hepworth, 2016 p. 152) or Gothenburg phenomenography (Hasselgren and Beach, 2006 p. 191). But origin-account ambiguities are not unusual nor necessarily significant. As Tight (2016) points out, "It is a characteristic of specialist terms, such as phenomenography, that they often turn out to have been used before, either in related or different contexts." (2016 p. 322). Nevertheless, this contemporary manifestation is not, too, without its critics, and I elaborate appropriately within the body of my thesis.

Distinctions

Implied within Sonneman's (1954 p. 344) and Needleman's (Binswanger and Needleman, 1963 p. 37) insinuations about phenomenography is a relationship with phenomenology.

Alsop & Tompsett agree that : "Phenomenography must... be clearly distinguished from phenomenology" (Alsop and Tompsett, 2006). Whilst the terms clearly share an etymological root, phenomenology asserts distinction between the phenomenon

and the experience of the phenomenon and so focuses on meaning in the former – the thing itself. Whereas phenomenography treats the two as complementary in forming meaning, though focusses on analysing the latter – the ways of experiencing of the thing. Marton (1981) elucidates by citing the experience of political power, directing that a phenomenologist: “would aim at learning about political power” (1981 p. 180) whereas a phenomenographer: “would aim at learning about people’s experience of political power.” (1981 p. 180) The point here is that the two have different philosophies underpinning their focus, and my study uses the focus of phenomenography. Marton makes three further distinctions between the two. He paints phenomenology as seeking ‘essence’ of an experience, “basically methodological” (Marton, 1981 p. 181), and concerned with ‘pre-reflective’ (raw) experience: as Husserl would have it: “back to the thing itself”. Whereas Marton proposes that in (his) phenomenography “aspects of reality, are experienced (or conceptualized) in a relatively limited number of qualitatively different ways” (Marton, 1981 p. 181) (the descriptions of which can be categorised); “substance-oriented” (i.e. “anything that can be said about how people perceive, experience and conceptualize” (1981 p. 181) the experience); and “as well with what is thought of as that which is lived” (processed) experience.

There follows a table based on that of Bernard et al (1999 p. 214), summarising differences between phenomenography and phenomenology.

Table 9 'Phenom' Comparisons after Barnard et al (1999 p. 214)

	Phenomenography	Phenomenology
And vs. Or	The structure and meaning of a phenomenon as experienced can be found in pre-reflective and conceptual thought.	A division is claimed between pre-reflective experience and conceptual thought.
Variation vs. Singular Essence	The aim is to describe variation in understanding from a perspective that views ways of experiencing phenomena as closed but not finite.	The aim is to clarify experiential foundations in the form of a singular essence.
Collective vs. Individual	An emphasis on collective meaning.	An emphasis on individual experience.
Second-order vs. First-order	A second-order perspective in which experience remains at the descriptive level of participants' understanding, and research is presented in a distinctive, empirical manner.	A noumenal first-order perspective that engages in the psychological reduction of experience.
Analysis Outcome (disputed)	Analysis leads to the identification of conceptions and outcome space.	Analysis leads to the identification of meaning units.

Barnard et al's (1999 p. 214) table's final row regarding analysis outcomes is struck-out because they appear to me to compare non-equivalent aspects of the approaches. That is, whilst phenomenology does indeed use the notion of 'meaning units' in the formation of its analysis, Svensson (2016), points out that: "most forms of qualitative analysis start with individual data as meaning units..." (2016 p. 281). Phenomenography is no exception, using meaning units (even if not always expressed as such) within a 'pool of meaning' (detailed later), as described by Åkerlind (2012) "All of the material that has been collected forms a pool of meaning" (2012). It is, rather, the relative treatment, contextualisation and decontextualisation of the meanings within that pool that form the difference between the two approaches.

It is safe, given these analyses, to assert that: "phenomenography is not an offspring of phenomenology" (Marton, 1986 p. 40), and that: "phenomenography, despite similarities to different older traditions, has to be given its own specific

foundation theoretical foundations” (Svensson, 1997 p. 163). That is because: “from a historical point of view, phenomenography was not developed on the basis of phenomenological philosophy... although there are fundamental similarities between phenomenography and phenomenology” (p. 164). Further, in practice: “most phenomenography is far from what might be conceived of as phenomenological” (Hasselgren and Beach, 2006 p. 200). Hasselgren & Beach (2006) return to Needleman’s (Binswanger and Needleman, 1963 p. 37) statement in optimistically settling that: “phenomenography is not good for nothing, nor a brother of phenomenology. It is productive research which can be developed in a number of ways” (Hasselgren and Beach, 2006 p. 200). Since I have shown that phenomenology is distinct from phenomenography, and make a claim to ‘borrow’ from phenomenography, the former can now be left behind in favour of a focus on the substance of phenomenography.

Appendix C: Interactive Interface

Journey from Pool of Meanings to Source Data

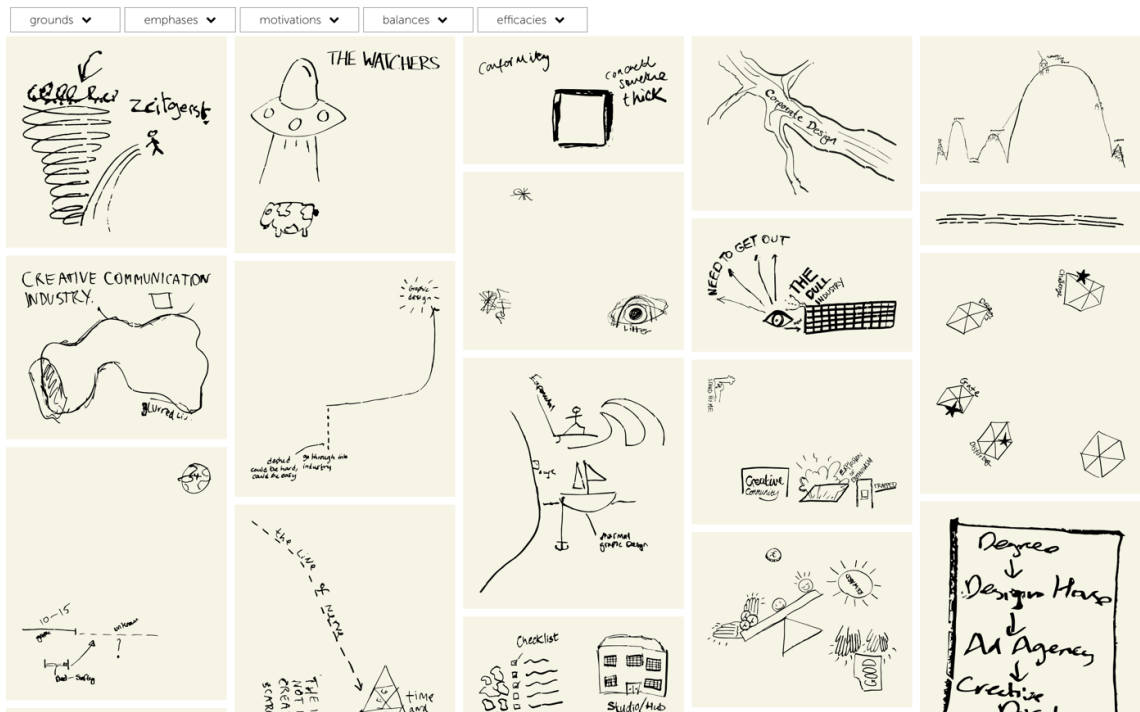


Figure 49 – Uncategorised 'Pool of Meanings' containing all analysed extracts

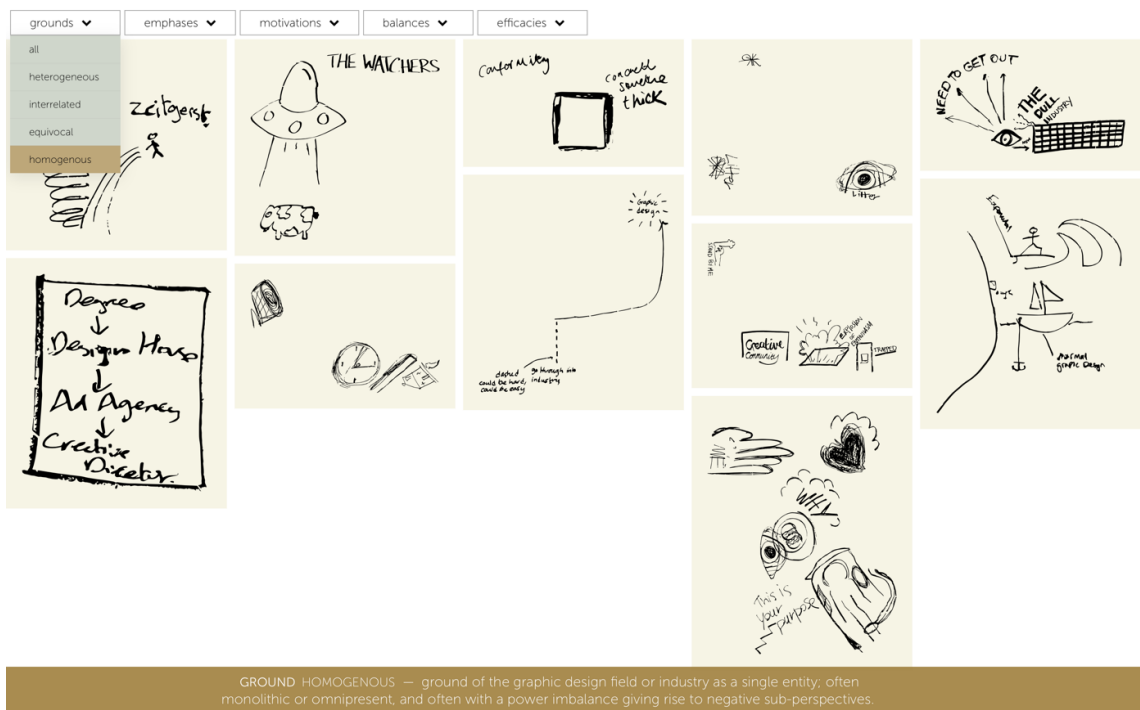
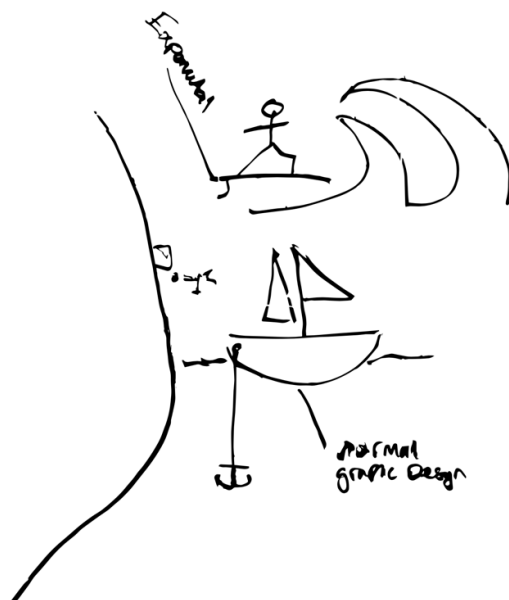


Figure 50 – Selection from menu of Category of Description title (here *homogenous*) shows description of the category and thumbnail images of extracts containing category conceptions



Figure 51 – Hovering over an extract image thumbnail shows title given to the extract (here sea vessels), and the external horizon(s) to which it relates (here industry and profession)



INDUSTRY PROFESSION

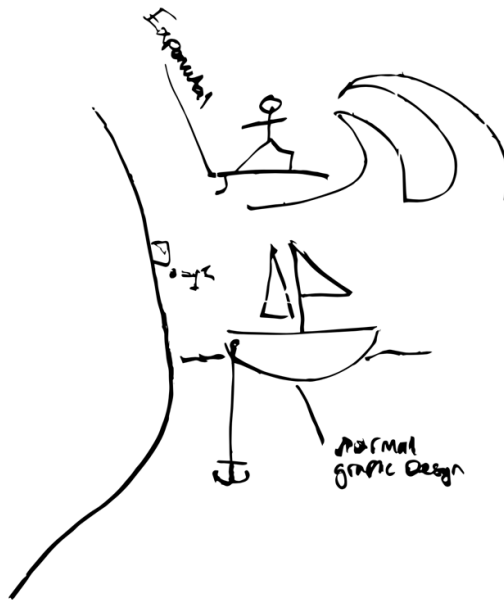
01 SEA VESSELS

0225 You get two types of the industry... one that's anchored down and they won't change... they will just stick with what they know and they'll get the same old client... and they're not so keen on reinventing themselves or they're used to print... They're kind of just starting getting used to websites... The extreme ideas are too extreme for them. And awards – yeah, they would like them, but they know they're probably not going to get them, so they're just more interested in getting clients and their day-to-day business...

0330 And then I think you get other types who are further out in the ocean... and they're on like a surfboard... surfing the waves. And then you'll get others, I think, that are doing ground-breaking work and are questioning people's thoughts on certain topics... I couldn't do just something that was just mind-numbingly, 'Oh, we'll stay with the same thing. Oh, you can't do that because it will offend this person and this person and this person.' I think if it's good design it offends half the people because then people actually remember it... Because of the internet, industries are just getting blurred... it's like a colour hue. There's thicker parts of that industry where it's bog-standard... but then science and arts will link, and then maybe history and English will link and they're kind of all starting to blur together, and I think it's because of the internet and people kind of experiment other passions they like.

2

Figure 52 – Clicking extract thumbnail reveals larger extract graphic and associated verbal text as a unified extract (which may exhibit a number of conceptions)



INDUSTRY PROFESSION

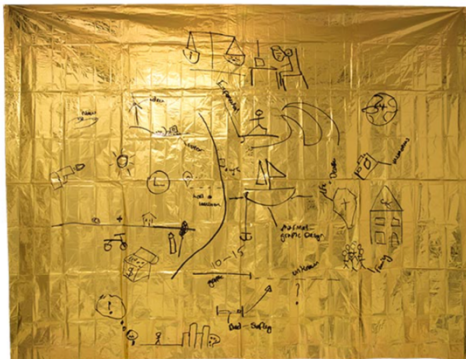
01 SEA VESSELS

02:25.2 You get two types of the industry... one that's anchored down and they won't change... they will just stick with what they know and they'll get the same old client... and they're not so keen on reinventing themselves or they're used to print... They're kind of just starting getting used to websites... The extreme ideas are too extreme for them. And awards – yeah, they would like them, but they know they're probably not going to get them, so they're just more interested in getting clients and their day-to-day business...

03:13.0 And then I think you get other types who are further out in the ocean... and they're on like a surfboard... surfing the waves. And then you'll get others, I think, that are doing ground-breaking work and are questioning people's thoughts on certain topics... I couldn't do just something that was just mind-numbingly, 'Oh, we'll stay with the same thing. Oh, you can't do that because it will offend this person and this person and this person.' I think if it's good design it offends half the people because then people actually remember it... Because of the internet, industries are just getting blurred... It's like a colour hue. There's thicker parts of that industry where it's bog-standard...but then science and arts will link, and then maybe history and English will link and they're kind of all starting to blur together, and I think it's because of the internet and people kind of experiment other passions they like.

X

Figure 53 – Timecodes are emphasised when hovering on any greyed timecode in text



00:31:58.3	Uh-huh.	192
00:31:58.6	The ones you'd get at Oxford and Cambridge, basically.	192
00:32:02.6	So what's the character of this industry then, that's somewhere here?	192
00:32:08.5	Uh, yeah, so it kind of goes here...	192
00:32:10.5	Yeah.	192
00:32:11.6	...I'd say. And I would say it's...um... It's like a... Uh, it's like a ship.	192
00:32:23.8	Okay.	192
00:32:25.2	And, uh, you'll get two types of industry. You'll get one who... So here's a ship. [rustling of sheet]	192
00:32:31.5	Uh-huh.	192
00:32:32.1	And here's the water. And you get two types of the industry. You get one that's anchored down and they won't change to do anything. They will just stick with what they know and they'll get the same old client now and now and again and they're not so keen on reinventing themselves or they're used to print, they're used to... They're kind of just starting getting used to websites. They're back down. They don't really want to... The extreme ideas are too extreme for them and awards – yeah, they would like them but they know they're probably not going to get them so they're just more interested in getting clients and their day-to-day business and running the...	192
00:33:12.7	Okay.	192
00:33:13.0	And then I think you get other types who are further out in the ocean...	192
00:33:20.4	Uh-huh.	192
00:33:20.9	... [rustling of sheet] and they're on like a surfboard. [mumbling] And he's surfing the waves. And then, um, I think that... And then you'll get others, I think, that are doing ground-breaking work and are questioning people's thoughts on certain topics. I think that's the problem. I think... I couldn't do just something that was just mind-numbingly, 'Oh, we'll stay with the same thing. Oh, you can't do that because it will offend this	192

Figure 54 – Clicking any timecode reveals whole source transcript and whole source blanket together as an artefact, with transcript display adjusted to the timecode selected



00:31:58.3	Uh-huh.	135
00:31:58.6	The ones you'd get at Oxford and Cambridge, basically.	192
00:32:02.6	So what's the character of this industry then, that's somewhere here?	135
00:32:08.5	Uh, yeah, so it kind of goes here...	192
00:32:10.5	Yeah.	135
00:32:11.6	...I'd say. And I would say it's...um... It's like a... Uh, it's like a ship.	192
00:32:23.8	Okay.	135
00:32:25.2	And, uh, you'll get two types of industry. You'll get one who... So here's a ship. [rustling of sheet]	192
00:32:31.5	Uh-huh.	135
00:32:32.1	And here's the water. And you get two types of the industry. You get one that's anchored down and they won't change to do anything. They will just stick with what they know and they'll get the same old client now and now and again and they're not so keen on reinventing themselves or they're used to print, they're used to... They're kind of just starting getting used to websites. They're back down. They don't really want to... The extreme ideas are too extreme for them and awards – yeah, they would like them but they know they're probably not going to get them so they're just more interested in getting clients and their day-to-day business and running the...	192
00:33:12.7	Okay.	135
00:33:13.0	And then I think you get other types who are further out in the ocean...	192
00:33:20.4	Uh-huh.	135
00:33:20.9	... [rustling of sheet] and they're on like a surfboard. [mumbling] And he's surfing the waves. And then, um, I think that... And then you'll get others, I think, that are doing ground-breaking work and are questioning people's thoughts on certain topics. I think that's the problem. I think... I couldn't do just something that was just mind-numbingly, 'Oh, we'll stay with the same thing. Oh, you can't do that because it will offend this ...	192

Figure 55 – Clicking any graphic extract in an extract or artefact screen rotates the blanket or graphic extract so that features originally drawn in other orientations can be more easily read